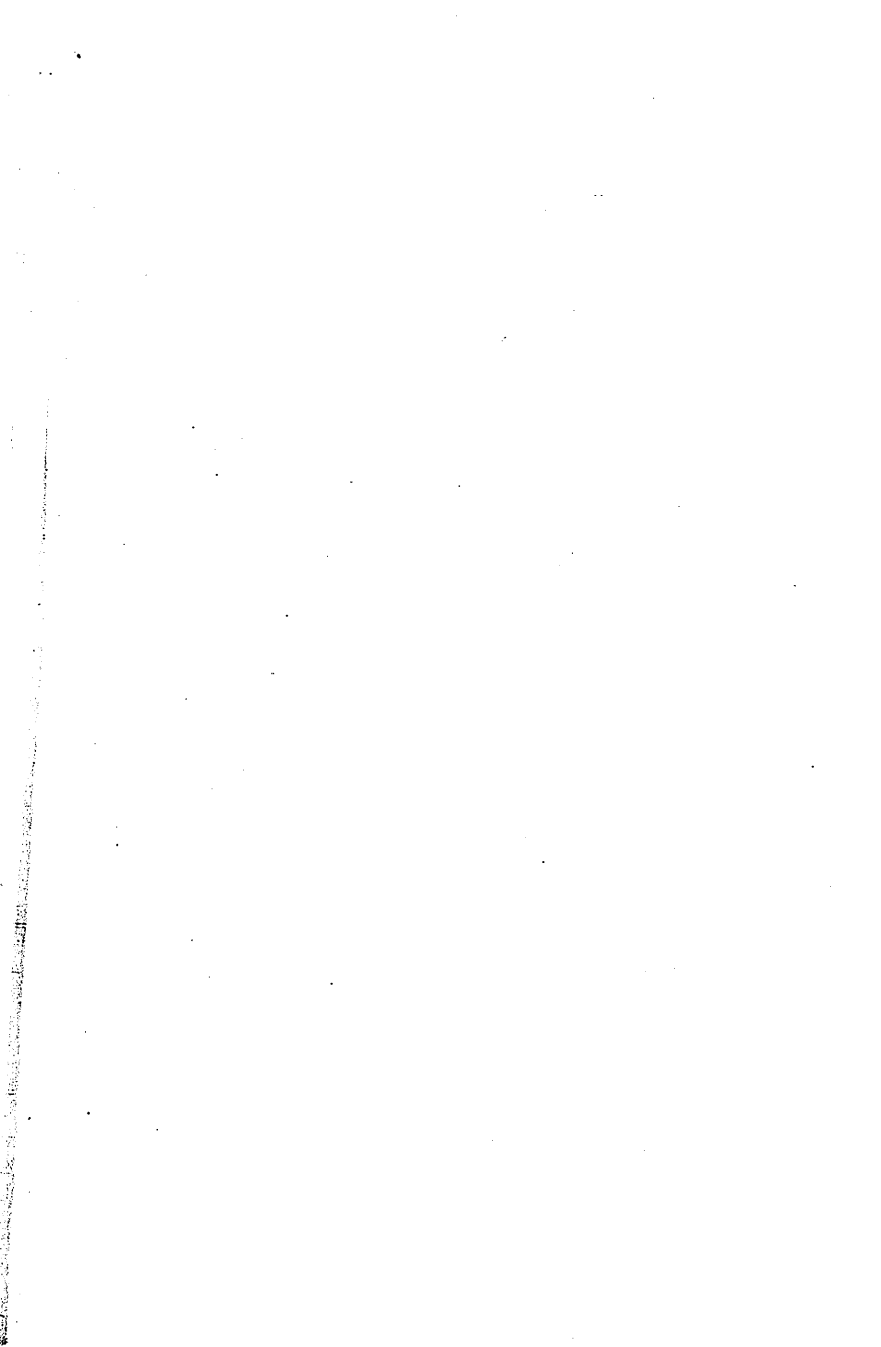


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**MOTIVES AND METHODS  
IN MODERN EVANGELISM**

WORKS BY

Charles L. Goodell, D.D.

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*Motives and Methods in  
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# Motives and Methods in Modern Evangelism

By

CHARLES L. GOODELL, D.D.

*Executive Secretary, Commission on  
Evangelism and Life Service of the  
Federal Council of the  
Churches of Christ in America*



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*To the*

***Rev. SAMUEL PARKES CADMAN, D. D.***

*Faithful Friend of many years*

*Leader in the Christian Church*

*Gifted Preacher of the*

*Great Evangel*



## PREFACE

**T**HE world never needed religion so much as it needs it now. Our wealth has developed more rapidly than our conscience. Civilization ever more tends toward complexities, and the relations among men are so complicated and their demands so insistent that only the man of highest motive and deepest purpose is able to meet them.

The questions which front the world are not academic questions; they are not questions primarily of theology or of sociology. "Errors of the head begin in the heart," said Newton long ago, and long before his time a greater than he said, "Keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life." Men may differ as widely in matters of theology as the members of the Supreme Court of the United States do in matters of law and fact, and yet hold true to the great underlying principles which affect character and destiny.

Some people estimate Jesus Christ from the standpoint of a Galilean rabbi; others estimate Him from the standpoint of a physical healer, and others from the standpoint of a social worker. While He did teach and heal, and urge a larger social content, neither one nor all of these com-

bined touch the heart of His message to the world. It is not what He taught or what He did in the realm of the physical that makes Him tower above all men and all ages. Of Him it was said, "His name shall be called Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins." And of Himself, He said, "Whoso hath seen me hath seen the Father." "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." "And I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me."

It is because He came to bring salvation to those who were lost in trespasses and sins that the world holds Him as its Lord to-day. Systems of philosophy come and go. The world has sat at the feet of differing schools, and those who taught there have seen the world pass on and leave them alone, but in the spiritual realm He stands supreme after two thousand years.

What the world needs to-day is not so much to know about Him as to know Him. It is not a theory but an experience which the world needs. The evangel is nothing more nor less than the blessed story of a life wrought in somebody's heart and passed on to those who sit in the shadow of death. It is not so much reformation which the world needs as regeneration. It needs to be born from above. So Jesus said ages ago, so the apostles affirmed, and it is also the ringing testimony of the last man who has found surcease of sorrow, forgiveness of sin and a new life which

enables him to say, "The life which I now live I live by the faith of the Son of God."

The modern world seems to have tried about every road but the right one. Some have gone into paths of dalliance, and some have gone into blind alleys of philosophy or scientific thought, but the Bible is constantly affirming that there is a road which leadeth unto life, though there may be comparatively few who find it. There stands at the entrance to that path not a guide post or a thesis, but One with nail prints in His hands and feet, who says, "I am the way, the truth and the life." He says that the only kind of truth which amounts to anything is that which is incarnate, that the only kind of truth which will bless and uplift the world is felt truth. Here is the answer to all the speculations of all the schools, "If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine."

If a man says I do not believe this or that, the answer is, "Jesus came to bring not a creed, but a life." This does not mean that one creedal statement may not be better than another, but Jesus was constantly saying to those who claimed that they were orthodox, "What good does it do you? Are you purer and nobler, more holy and more unselfish, because of it? If so, well and good. But if you are cold and bitter and impure, your orthodoxy does not count. Thieves and harlots will go into the Kingdom of God before you."

Now it is this blessed evangel, the promulgation of the truth—not as it is in dogmas or creeds or theories, but as it is in Jesus Christ—to which this book addresses itself. It has to do with the motives which must actuate all service for the world, if that service is to be worth while. It puts special stress upon the fact that the worker's own soul must be right with God before he can help others into right relationships. One must have a clear conception of at least three points; and if he has these, the rest of the thirty-nine articles will not matter so much. He must see man a sinner, Christ the Saviour, and to-day the day of salvation.

*"Would a man 'scape the rod,"*

*Rabbi Ben Karshook saith.*

*"See that he turn to God*

*The day before his death."*

*"Ay, should a man inquire*

*When it shall come, I say,"*

*(The Rabbi's eyes shoot fire!)*

*"Then let him turn to-day!"*

If successful methods are wanted, they are here set down in variety and exactness. Many of these methods I found of great value in my own pastoral work and others have been proven efficient by my brethren of all denominations throughout the country. As Secretary of Evangelism for the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America, I have had opportunity to watch their workings.

I have seen many remarkable ingatherings and noted the reflexive influence upon the Christian life of church members.

This is the day of personal and pastoral evangelism. It is the return to the plan by which the Christian Church was founded. It is the passing of the good news from lip to lip. "Won to win," "Saved to serve," is the thrilling call and we cannot believe that any one can read these pages without feeling something of the thrill which answered the Master's call and emptied the rowers' benches in Galilee and made disciples from the ranks of publicans and sinners.

Methods are presented by which home training and the religious education of the Sunday school may be made spiritually effective. Methods of approach to the student mind are suggested which have won the support of thousands in college and seminary life. If to these methods there be added something of the passion of Jesus for the souls of men, and something of that holy zeal which was symbolized on the day of Pentecost by the tongue of flame, we may hope to see such spiritual triumphs as will proclaim the coming of a new day in the evangelistic life of the Church of God.

C. L. G.

*New York.*





## CONTENTS

1.	THE EVANGELISTIC MOTIVE . . . . .	13
2.	THE EVANGELISM OF JESUS . . . . .	19
3.	PENTECOST AND POWER . . . . .	24
4.	PRAYER AND EVANGELISM . . . . .	29
5.	THE BIBLE IN EVANGELISM . . . . .	35
6.	THE EVANGELISM OF THE STUDY . . . . .	40
7.	THE EVANGELISM OF THE PULPIT . . . . .	48
8.	APPEASELESS SOUL HUNGER . . . . .	54
9.	THE BANISHMENT OF FEAR . . . . .	61
10.	UNCONSCIOUS EVANGELISM . . . . .	66
11.	PREPARATION FOR THE EVANGEL . . . . .	70
12.	GUIDING A SOUL TO CHRIST . . . . .	75
13.	PERSONAL EVANGELISM . . . . .	82
14.	EVANGELISM AND THE MODERN MIND . . . . .	90
15.	EVANGELISM AND THE STUDENT MIND . . . . .	97
16.	HOME EVANGELISM . . . . .	106
17.	SUNDAY-SCHOOL EVANGELISM . . . . .	113
18.	VISITATION EVANGELISM . . . . .	120
19.	NORMAL EVANGELISM . . . . .	126
20.	WEEK-END EVANGELISM . . . . .	132
21.	OUTDOOR EVANGELISM . . . . .	138
22.	RURAL EVANGELISM . . . . .	143
23.	A PROGRAM FOR AMERICA . . . . .	152
24.	THE CONSTITUENCY ROLL . . . . .	160
25.	MEN'S EVANGELISTIC CLUBS . . . . .	166
26.	PLANS OF CONSERVATION . . . . .	170
27.	THE EVANGELISTIC IMPERATIVE . . . . .	176



## I

### THE EVANGELISTIC MOTIVE

**W**HY do you seek to win men to Christ? The answer to that question will be the answer to whether or not your work is worth while. If each person is only counted as another addition to the congregation, or to the pew-holders, or to the church subscribers, you are only a seller of goods, a promoter, a booster—and there is no lasting incentive for you or for those whom you influence. The motives you have urged are the same that any salesman would use to sell a bill of goods; the same motive a politician would use to get you to join his party and vote his ticket; the same that a student would use to get you for his fraternity, or a clubman for his club. We have quite enough in the church who came in under such conditions and were led by such motives. There is no depth of soul-surrender; there is no mighty conviction; there is no sense of sin and need of salvation; there is nothing to hold a man when the voice of the leader is silent, or the political or social urge is ended.

You must be the voice of God to that man's soul. His decision is for eternity—a decision for himself and his children and his children's children.

## 14 Motives and Methods in Modern Evangelism

When a man says, "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord," heaven and earth are bound to listen. Much of your work seems to be ephemeral. Men go back to their former indifference. Why? Many who backslide never really slid ahead. They never made the great surrender, they never made the thrilling adventure with God, with a solemn pledge on their own part for an endless life and fellowship with Him. You cannot hope to move others until you yourself are moved by some impelling motive. This choice you are asking your friend to make, is a question of eternal life or eternal death. It will save him from moral ruin in business; it will make his home a place where God will be loved and honoured, where his children will see in him such examples of a noble life as will keep them steady in temptation and will hold them to a true life where otherwise they might have fallen. It will enable him to master an evil appetite and all unholy passions, it will make him an example in the community, a bulwark of good society, so that his neighbours as well as his children will rise up to call him blessed. All that, and much more, is at stake when you ask a person to give his heart to God and his life to the building up of God's Kingdom on earth. You must not bungle your work—no half-way conviction, no divided allegiance. A thousand half-hearted Christians are not equal to one whole-hearted Christian.

If you only win a man to be an attendant at

church, or a pewholder, you may have done him incalculable harm. He may let his effort stop at that and become immune against a genuine and actual devotion to Christ. Christ asks us first to be disciples and then to disciple others, winning men who shall actually follow Christ. Make up your mind that by the grace of God you will do honest work, so that no man can ever accuse you of deceiving him, or of playing fast and loose with holy things. The things at stake are supernal and eternal. It ought to make your breath come fast to think of it. Think of your opportunity! What a glorious reward will be yours if you meet it in the fear of God! "They that turn many to righteousness shall shine as the stars forever."

"Let him know that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death and shall hide a multitude of sins." Can there be any bigger business on earth than that? To change a man's opinion in politics or science or art may call forth all the strength of party and propaganda, but how little it all amounts to side by side with a change of nature and of purpose that is to last forever.

The great motive and purpose of evangelism was declared when the coming of Jesus was prophesied: "His name shall be called Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins." In many quarters the word "sin" is taboo. It is a word likely to be passed over and its modern implications are such

## 16 Motives and Methods in Modern Evangelism

as to make one think that after all sin is only righteousness in the making, and is to be viewed with great complacency. But the Bible does not so consider it, nor does any man who has faced its fearful consequences either in himself or in others. The Bible affirms that God cannot regard it with the least degree of allowance, and men are everywhere repeating the cry of hearts which sin hath broken, "Oh, wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" It is the thing which made chaos in Eden, which sent forth Cain with a brand upon his forehead, which has undermined the fairest hopes and overthrown the noblest characters. Samson was strong, but sin defeated him and sent him, blind and alone, to grind the grists of the Philistines. Saul was matchless among men but sin sent him to the grave a suicide, falling upon his own sword. And time would fail one to tell of David's agony and all the dire catastrophes that fell upon the hearts of the men of olden times who gave place to sin in their lives. Nor is its record in modern times any more pleasing. It is at its ancient task of breaking hearts and digging graves. It has a Himalaya of its own—a mountain of broken hearts; it has a briny sea—an ocean of bitter tears.

Much of our modern teaching strives to eliminate sin as a factor in life, but it cannot be done. All literature stands with pages drenched in tears because of the agonies which sin has produced. Your

"Scarlet Letter," your "Jean Valjean," your "Wild Ass's Skin," and a hundred other masterpieces all voice the cry of the broken-hearted for release, not only from the guilt and penalty of sin, but from the love of it. If there is any power that can overwhelm that monster, no price would seem to be too great if we might be able to win through it a victory over that awful tyrant. That there is a power there can be no question. Men have seen victories multiplied by the thousand in the lives of men. There is no better fact to meditate upon than the holy asseveration of the apostle, "If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." We can realize that every hour the faithful servant of God, pastor or layman, has within his reach a remedy that can

"Minister to a soul diseased,  
Pluck from the memory a rooted sorrow,  
Raze out the written troubles of the heart,  
And by some sweet oblivious antidote  
Cleansse the stuffed bosom of the perilous stuff  
Which weighs upon the heart."

To feel that one has a power like that within his reach is to make him mighty with a strength not his own and to fill him with a wisdom greater than his own little ken.

## 18 Motives and Methods in Modern Evangelism

There are teachers of a new psychology who tell us that children know nothing about the sense of sin and guilt. Such an academic utterance may pass where men have had no experience, but to those who have sinned in childhood and felt a sense of guilt hardly matched in maturity, all such words are the vapourings of an inexperienced imagination.

If we are able to get along very comfortably with ourselves; if all we need to do about sin is to wave it aside and forget it; men may be satisfied with some system of philosophy. If there is no difference between him who serveth God and him who serveth Him not; if forgiveness is not a necessity and men do not have to reap as they have sown, perhaps one road to Nirvana may be as good as another. If men can get along pretty well without Christ and without hope, then why bother to preach the Gospel either at home or abroad, either to the Pharisees or the Magdalenes, who are found in all nations and in all lands? But if it is true that nobody can do "pretty well" except divine power be granted them, if it is true that no man in love with sin and its practices can meet God in peace, then it is high time that we hasten on quick feet to bring the Good News, the Gospel of Salvation, to exalt Him who said, "And I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me! "



## II

### THE EVANGELISM OF JESUS

**H**ENRY WARD BEECHER once said to one of his dearest ministerial friends, "Do you know what my deepest feeling is when I face my audience?" "No," answered the friend. "What is it?"

Beecher replied, "Compassion. Ah," he continued, "we must be endlessly, incredibly compassionate."

More than a dozen times in the New Testament it is written of the Master, "He was moved with compassion." He saw a stolid multitude; He saw men thronging the highways of sin and rushing madly to their fate, but He did not think of them as men foredoomed and utterly damned; He rather looked on them as sheep without a shepherd, rushing into sins and calamities, and His heart yearned after them.

Sympathy, compassion! That first word means to "suffer with"; in other words, Jesus put Himself in their places. He remembered that they were sinned against as well as sinning. He saw a long course of events which had brought them where they were. He looked under the surface,

## 20 Motives and Methods in Modern Evangelism

to see the real worth hidden under an accumulation of bad desires and wicked passions and practices. Observe the attitude of His mind as He talks to those to whom He brought His blessed evangel. He does not turn from Nicodemus, the Pharisee. He shows him a plain path to life and duty; He meets the man on a common platform, and from that position He unfolds the absolute necessity of a new birth. See Him at the dinner party in the house of Simon, the Pharisee. Why should not He, who was purity itself, and who could not look upon sin with the least degree of allowance, why should not He draw His robes about Him that He might be safe from the defilement of a sinful woman? But it is His compassion which moves Him, which floods His soul. Doubtless the Master had talked to the woman before; doubtless He knew her past, her grievous disappointments, her betrayal. She does not come to Simon's feast so much to ask forgiveness, as to express gratitude for what she has already received. It was because His heart went out in infinite longing toward a sheep who had wandered far, that He speaks peace to her soul, "Neither do I condemn thee. Go in peace and sin no more." And why should He not have turned from the Samaritan woman as He sat by the well—a woman bankrupt alike in character and reputation? What had they two in common? He the spotless, and she a woman so lost to all sense of virtue and propriety

that she had not even troubled to get a formal sanction to a disreputable life. But compassion is at the front. He probed so deeply into her heart as to touch a longing there of which perhaps the woman herself had not been conscious until that moment. Such passionate desire sprang up within her that to satisfy the longing of her thirsty soul she was fain to cry: "Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come hither to draw."

He is looking now on a blind man. Poor fellow! He had compassion on him. Some one may have told the blind Bartimeus of Jesus' reputation; those who consorted with the Master were themselves so much impressed with it that when He sent somebody to call the blind man the message said: "Be of good comfort, rise; he calleth thee." He was always a lover of men. How could He help showing it? The record says of Him that He was charmed by the little home in Bethany and that He "loved Martha and Mary and Lazarus." It is the eyes of love which see possibilities hidden from the eyes of hate. It is a loving heart which thrills with a sweet response where others hear no sound. You would suppose that He would at least draw the line where men were so lost to all decency, not to say humanity, as to betray Him and at last crucify Him, but before they accomplished their fearful purpose and worked their unspeakable desolation, He looked them full in the face and exclaimed: "How oft

## 22 Motives and Methods in Modern Evangelism

would I have gathered thy children together even as a hen gathereth her chickens! ”

We think of our difficulties and troubles, we sympathize with ourselves; we pose as suppliants for the ministrations of others and forget any demands which might be made upon us. But when Jesus is hanging on His cross He is thinking not of Himself but of those who hated Him. The cry to His Father is not, “Crush mine enemies and overwhelm them; make them drink of the bitter cup which they have put to my lips.” He has another cry—an alien cry in this world of self and sin; instead of wresting His hands from the nails of the cross, to throw confusion into the faces of His enemies; instead of lashing with His own tongue the men who had moistened His lips with the vinegar of malice, He cries unto God: “Father, forgive them—for they know not what they do!” And while the railing voice of the highwayman—guilty, it may be, of unspeakable iniquities and of murder itself—cries out in hate, He turns with an answer to meet the plaintive voice of a repentant soul, sinner like the other, and says to him in a voice that must have opened heaven to the other’s soul: “To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise! ”

The commentators will tell you of the intellectual method by which Jesus presented the evangel to those in need, but I prefer to remind you of the spirit which was in His heart and of the motive

power of that evangelism which took form according to the need of each soul to whom He addressed Himself. May I remind you that the dialectic method of Jesus is of little importance—that His arguments took form not on an intellectual but on a heart basis, and that the men to whom He made His appeal yielded to the blessed evangel because they saw Him as the Lover of all men, Who would not that any should perish, but that all might come to Him and live.

If your heart is not thrilled with His passion, how can you bring His message? If you do not really love lost men in spite of their sin and because of their need, how can you ever be a fisher of men? It is the heart which giveth grace unto every art, and nowhere more than in winning the sinful and the broken-hearted unto God.

### III

#### PENTECOST AND POWER

**P**ROBABLY we shall never know just what happened on the Day of Pentecost, but we know something about the setting of the scene on the human side. Something had happened—a fact so stupendous as to become the one foundation on which the Church rests to-day—the fact that she has a risen Lord. A band of frightened believers became invincible because of that dynamic. As a prelude to their march of conquest, they halt at their Master's direction in the upper room for the enduement of power. Who are the men who are waiting there, and what has been the attitude of their leaders? They were common men who received here uncommon power—a power so great that it seemed to have conquered a cowardly, shameful past. They never lost it: "On the morrow they faced the rulers and elders," Annas and Caiaphas among them.

There is one word here which carries a volume with it. The account says of the onlookers that when they beheld the *boldness* of Peter they marvelled; Peter, the vacillating, the blasphemous and impious, has suddenly become bold. How did it happen? Jowett reminds us that our hardest

rocks are just transformed mud that has passed through the ministry of terrific fire. Something of that sort seems to have taken place here by the influence of the flame of Pentecost. All that was ignoble in Peter, all the dross of him, seems to have been burned up. The spirit that cowed before the Roman serving girl is now aflame; the man who was once a coward has been transformed, and his one characteristic is his boldness. He has a kindred spirit now in John, for their names are coupled together in this second account. The people cannot understand it. It was not because of any ability, natural or acquired; it was not because of any training in any Jewish school. The record marks the effect on the bystanders: "They perceived they were unlearned and ignorant men." Unlearned—they did not wear the talith of a teacher; they were likely clad in their fishers' cloaks; they had not the accent of cultivated men; the language of the fisher folk was on their lips, and they spoke the patois of the street. But strange to say, they did not cringe or cower; they did not ask anybody's pardon; they were strangers to fear even in the presence of Annas and Caia-phas of terrible memory. With an assurance which struck the onlookers dumb, they brought home to men of culture and position and wealth the unspeakable catastrophe of the cross.

There is one explanation and only one that can be given of it all; it is the explanation which the

## 26 Motives and Methods in Modern Evangelism

writer of the Book of Acts gives and shows that it was adequate and satisfactory. This is the way he puts it: "Then Peter, *filled with the Holy Ghost.*" We might spend much time in unfolding the means and the agent. "Filled"—we have many words built upon that one; men are *hopeful* and *purposeful* and *helpful*. All their capacity is met, they reach the saturation point. The tide has come in; a river is overflowing its banks. These are very feeble illustrations of a Spirit-filled life. Self has disappeared. The jangling voices of time, of sin and evil ambition are heard no more. Filled, not with greed or passion, but with the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit! It is thrilling to see in what form that indwelling Spirit may manifest itself. Jesus said, "Tarry ye until ye be endued with power from on high."

Hear how the record reads: "And while they were yet praying, the place was shaken wherein they were gathered together, and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness."

It is our fear which makes cowards of us all. An unholy, unhappy or impotent past stares us in the face, and memory becomes a lash. "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" But at last deliverance comes; it is the Holy Spirit breaking all bonds, taking of the things of God and revealing them unto us. Memory which was a lash be-



comes a benediction; holy promises stand over against the hosts of our besetting sins, and our enemies are routed by the omnipotence of God. May the memory of it never fade out of our thought!

And now we face another revelation: "When they saw the boldness of Peter and John, they took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus." You thought that gentleness and meekness were the chief characteristics of Jesus, but it seems that those who knew Him best were impressed not so much with His meekness as with His boldness. There was in Him something which gave men strength, something which gave a coward the spirit of a martyr, something which from that day to this has put life under the ribs of death and made men invincible for righteousness. Stephen looked into His face and was steadfast unto death; something was gleaned from the portals of His lips which the Church fathers said was the human means of opening the heart of Saul to the light. It was the same power which transformed Savonarola and which made Luther say, "Here I stand, God help me, I can do no other"; which made Bunyan say, "I will stay in prison until the moss grows over my eyebrows, sooner than deny my Lord." It was the power which made the martyrs look lions out of countenance and sent them to the block and the scaffold with the joy of a bridegroom going to meet his bride.

## 28 Motives and Methods in Modern Evangelism

In some way or other, we must get that power or we are undone. We are afraid; there are lions in the way. The sons of Anak are marching down upon us, and we are as grasshoppers in their sight and in our own sight. What chance is there for any victory; what hope is there; what triumph, with such demoralized leaders and such an impotent army? We must not go down to battle until we get His power in prayer as they got it of old at Pentecost; in emptying the soul of self that it may be filled with the Holy Spirit; in renouncing all else that no lesser thought or purpose shall unnerve or weaken our souls. It is the same Holy Spirit now as then. The need for the Spirit-filled life was never greater than now. We must not go to the conquest of the world unless the world's Conqueror goes with us. Pentecost and power! If we can find the first, we shall have the second.

“I worship Thee, O Holy Ghost.

I love to worship Thee—

With Thee each day is Pentecost,

Each night nativity.”

## IV

### PRAYER AND EVANGELISM

**O**UR scientists are only now finding out the vast power of the hitherto unknown forces of nature. What we thought was a void above us is proving to be the home of immeasurable forces. Sir Oliver Lodge dwells on the immense power of nature which is held in leash, but he also says that however great may be the unused forces of nature, the unused forces of prayer are infinitely greater. Perhaps there is no other field than evangelism where we need so much to know what true prayer is and what is its mighty value.

As Christians I suppose the first question we ought to ask ourselves is this: "What was the testimony and practice of Jesus concerning prayer?" He was the poorest sleeper and the greatest pray-er of the ages. We are told He "continued all night in prayer"; again, it is said that "a great while before day" He arose to pray. It was in prayer that He conquered His temptation in the mountains of Quarantania. He was transformed in prayer before He was transfigured in countenance. He kept His soul aflame with holy passion by prayer, and in Gethsemane He won by the same means His final victory.

### 30 Motives and Methods in Modern Evangelism

Perhaps there is nothing about which more misunderstanding has gathered than the matter of prayer. Prayer has suffered quite as much in the house of its friends as in the house of its enemies. If men of a heathen or of a scientific mind have misapprehended it, so also those who have been most diligent in its use have failed to catch its spirit. To some it has been simply teasing God, with the thought that if one's own desires are pressed long enough and insistently enough, God can be induced to grant the request.

In the matter of spiritual work, a notion has prevailed in some quarters that in answer to prayer strange omens of grace, mystical and persuasive, would overwhelm a community without any human effort. It is true that "more things are wrought by prayer than this world dreams of"; it is true also that by fellowship with God we come into tune with Him, and that the practice of the presence of God is the highest expression of the spirit of prayer. But as we exercise this practice, there is more and more deeply borne in upon our consciousness the fact that we must be workers together with God, that we must be used of Him to bring miracles of grace to the hearts of the people, and to carry with our own feet and with our own lips the blessed message of the evangel to those who so greatly need.

With many persons prayer has been estimated by the tangible *things* which can be gained through

it—the material reward; and we are asked, “What is the use of praying, unless you can gain what you want by it?” Are we quite sure that we really know what we want? These are the things for which so many pray:

“Give me money. Poverty brings so many temptations. It is a terrible thing to be poor.” But Jesus said that the temptations of poverty were nothing in comparison with the temptations of riches: “How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of heaven.” With more than an even chance that riches will ruin your soul, will you still pray for them?

“I want success.” How do you know you do? Solomon had success, and see what he did with it! Are you sure you would do any better? It is not the song of the victor, but the song of the conquered, that has made music for the ages. Most of the men who have moved the world to God have died poor, and condemned by the age in which they lived.

“At least, I want health and strength.” How do you know you do? Samson had both; see what he did with them! Are you sure you would do any better? If the pulsing tides of health kindle the fires of lust in your soul, you had better be bedridden. Fanny Crosby said that the losing of her sight had saved her soul; and Helen Keller, deaf and dumb and blind, said: “The greatest calamity may be God’s bridge to the promised

land." The answer to Paul's prayer for health was a denial of the thing he asked for, but was also the granting of a greater blessing, "My grace is sufficient for thee." The Saviour's healing acts were not supremely for the physical, but chiefly for their influence on spiritual things.

"I must have the life of my dear ones spared to me." Are you sure of that? Often life is a thousand times worse than death; it were infinitely better for God to take our dear ones to Himself than to leave them to suffer agonies of disease or the deeper tragedy of spiritual death.

What then is the prayer which is to fit us to exemplify and propagate the great evangel? The essence of prayer is union with Him; it is to think His thoughts after Him. Prayer is an attitude of the soul, not simply a petition on the lips. I do not tell Him what He must do; I ask Him to show me what I ought to have, and to give me what is best.

So the great answer to prayer is not a handful of gifts but a changed countenance. It will hush the voice of our querulous complaining to listen to the voice of infinite love. Then we can sing:

"I was not ever thus, nor prayed that Thou  
Shouldst lead me on;  
I loved to choose and see my path, but now  
Lead Thou me on."

This does not mean that you are precluded from talking with God about anything. You can pray

about the weather or your health or your fortune or your friends, or anything else, but remember that the initiative is not with you, but with Him. If you are in harmony with Him and His Spirit, your prayer is indited by His own will, and therefore must perforce be answered.

Why should you set up your will as supreme? Why should you want a second best when you can have the best? We often cry, "Thy will be done," in agony, as the last despairing cry of a surrendered will. Why not say it with joy and shouting: "Thy will be done!" It is the only thing that ought to be done; it is the only thing worth doing; it is the only thing worth having. Therefore, we ought to cry with glad assurance: "Thy will be done!" It is when we realize what God's will is, how it was revealed on the cross, how "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life"; it is when we remember "His name shall be called Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins"; it is when we realize that the whole life of Jesus could be condensed into the words, "He had a passion for saving the lost"; it is then, through fellowship with Him, through the sharing of His own mighty passion, that our prayer finds its proper motive and the thrill of it changes us into the similitude of the heavenly. Then we go about answering the cry of our own souls, which is also the cry of the heart of

## 34 Motives and Methods in Modern Evangelism

God. It is this prayer which clears our vision, which energizes our soul, which gives us a power which otherwise had been wanting, and a perception of the way to meet the world's needs which otherwise we had failed to see. "They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength. They shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; they shall walk, and not faint." So it is prayer that makes all things possible to him whose life is hid with Christ in God.



## V

### THE BIBLE IN EVANGELISM

**T**HE Bible is bound with a crimson thread. There are sixty-six books and their messages differ, of course, but there is a common note running through them all. It is the story of God's method in winning a wayward world. I am looking at the Book not with the microscope of the petty critic but with the broad view of Him who inspired it.

What thrilling stories are here of conviction mastering convenience and personal ease! How it makes your heart leap to read of a man whose sense of values was not measured by the present and the seen, who esteemed the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt, "for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward," who, when even those for whom he had forsaken all were against him and would have stoned him to death, "endured as seeing him who is invisible." And when God would have destroyed those who hated him, he prayed: "Blot me, I pray thee, out of thy book, but spare them." There is a yearning soul for you. Here is another: "O Ephraim, how shall I give thee up!" And here is one who answers the call of God with, "Here am I, send me!" Long before any of them was Abraham,

## 36 Motives and Methods in Modern Evangelism

friend of God, who heard His call and went out not knowing whither he went, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, "the heirs with him of the same promise: For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God." But these were not all, for time would fail to tell of those "who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens"—of whom the world was not worthy.

Now, the Bible is the thrilling story of those who counted not their own lives dear unto themselves. In losing themselves, they saved their lives, as the Saviour said they would. Some of them said, "Silver and gold have I none, but such as I have give I unto you." So they made the lame to walk and the blind to see. The lepers were cleansed, the dead were raised, and the poor had the Gospel preached unto them. Wouldn't you like to do that? You can—if you will. Think of the return which the Bible promises to those who will spread this personal evangel: "They that turn many to righteousness shall shine as the stars, forever and ever." St. Paul knew that delight when he called his converts "my joy and my crown." Like Wesley, he was "out of breath pursuing souls," and reminds the Ephesian elders of the fact that by the space of three years he went about the streets of their city urging men and women to

come to God, and was so moved by the need and urge of it that his tears moistened the pavement as he walked.

If you want to know how the Church came to be, read the first chapter of John. There you are at the fountain head. Jesus said, "I am the Christ," and Andrew heard Him and told his brother, Peter, "We have found the Christ," and he brought him to Jesus. Was not that single personal testimony a wonderful thing for the Church? The next day Jesus won Philip, and Philip won Nathaniel. Apparently the Church started with the idea that every one who found Jesus was to bring another to Him before the day was over. If the Church actually had done that—or had worked even at the rate of one a year apiece—the whole world would have been won to God before John the apostle died or his Gospel had been written. Can we not resume that early habit now? If we will do that, we can help to make amends for the failure of the early years, and for the cataclysm of the dark ages, and win the whole world to God in less than one decade.

Do you want to know more about the personal evangelism of the New Testament men and women? Let me tell you.

1. John tells us, in his fourth chapter, a wonderful story of a woman with a shady past who happened to meet Jesus. In asking a drink of water from her, He Himself gave to her a saving

### 38 Motives and Methods in Modern Evangelism

drink of the water of life. What an example of using one's opportunities to do good! Any other Jew would have failed even to speak to her—at any rate, to have spoken for any good purpose. Moreover, she was one of the Samaritans with whom Jews have no dealings whatever. Yet Jesus took the first step, and she wondered at it. He went straight to the heart of things. In a minute she said, "I wish I had what you talk about," and He rejoined, "Poor woman, how much you need it! And you can have it." Then what happens? She does not keep the good news to herself. See her run! "She left her water pot." She runs as fast as she can and then invites: "Come, and see!" That was what won a whole city. It will always win any city. If you can get saved people to testify, the other people will come. The citizens shortly afterward tell the woman: "Now we believe. Not because of thy saying, for we have heard him ourselves, and know that he is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world." Would you not like to have as good a record as had that damaged but faithful soul, with a thousand "stars in her crown" for one day's good work?

2. There is another fine story of how a man who was ready to work for God was led to his opportunity. The man's name was Philip. The eighth chapter of the Acts (Acts 8: 26–28) gives us some of his characteristics. We learn that he

was "a good man." "What you are speaks so loudly that I cannot hear what you say," is nowhere truer than in spiritual work. If we are right with God, we shall be likely to be of good repute among the people. He was full of the Holy Spirit, so he had the passion and purpose of his Master; and he was full of wisdom. For his work he would need it all. The simple story has great lessons for each of us. The record runs: "The angel of the Lord spake unto Philip saying, Arise; and he arose, and went." He was true to the leading of the Spirit. Will you enter any open door of opportunity which God shows you? It is surprising to see how God goes before His workers and prepares the way for them. If He sends any one, He has prepared the one to whom that person is sent. Every Christian worker can tell of similar special help in unexpected ways. Philip was full of interest in His work; he ran with delight over having a chance to present his Christ. He knew the Scriptures and was ready to give a reason for the hope that was in him. The eunuch, in consequence, was not content until he actually had professed his abiding faith in Jesus Christ as Saviour and asked for the privilege of joining in a solemn covenant with God. It was thorough business—and that is the only kind that blesses all concerned.

Let us apply the remedy; the remedy will do the rest.

## VI

### THE EVANGELISM OF THE STUDY

**I**F you are going to preach to a critical audience, you must prepare your sermon. If you are going to speak to needy and throbbing hearts, you must prepare yourself. The most difficult congregation to face is not one of ten thousand, it is a congregation of one. Nothing requires so much courage, and nothing so much preparation, as to face an audience of that dimension. In an audience of ten thousand nobody talks back, but in an audience of one, it is give and take. There is no time to make special preparation when one is face to face with the cry of need. There must be an answer on the spot. No other fruitage equals the results which come from the heart-to-heart message, spoken when one has sought out a certain rich man, a certain beggar or a certain boy who has gone astray, and has ministered unto his need.

Here are the great experiences of the pastor's heart. The holiest things in life are shared by him. At the marriage altar, in the sick room, in the time of failure and distress; in disaster, mental, physical or spiritual, the pastor has his place as has no one else. The mother lays her little babe in his hands, and asks him to voice for her the

solemn dedication of her child to God. When the scent of the orange blossoms is in the air, it is the blessed privilege for possibly the same pastor who christened the bride as a little girl to pronounce the solemn and happy words which bring that girl into the fruition of her dreams. And if perchance the orange blossoms change to immortelles, it is the same voice hallowed by blessed memories which brings such comfort, because of those experiences, as no other voice on earth could bring. Is there anything in all the range of human experience which is more Christly?

If the minister is to preside in matters of earthly circumstance, he has a responsibility holier yet. He is to be a spiritual physician in the hour of birth; if he bungles his task, spiritual death will be the result. It is an impressive moment when a physician holds a scalpel at a clinic and knows that in the turn of his finger lies life or death for his patient. It is even a greater moment when a pastor, taken into the holy of holies to watch a soul's awakening, comes to understand that his words will be a savour of life unto life, or of death unto death, in an experience to outlast the stars.

It is a touching story which George Eliot tells in *Middlemarch*: "There is a simple gravestone in Midlothian churchyard telling that in this spot lies Edgar Tryon, for two years officiating curate at Paddiford Chapel-Ease in this parish. It is a meagre memorial and tells you simply that the

man who lies there took upon him faithfully or unfaithfully the things of God and instructed his fellow-man. But there is another memorial of Edgar Tryon which bears a fuller record. It is Janet Dempster, rescued from self, strengthened through divine hopes and now looking on things of pure and healthy labour. The man who left such a memorial behind him must have been one whose heart beat with true compassion and whose lips were moved by fervent faith."

The growing of the soul is each man's own concern. But the minister's soul must grow especially into that form which reveals the soul of the Gospel. It is the presupposition that a minister has heard in his soul the call of God that carried with it a consecration of all his powers. Was it the call of God? Not of ease, or of social rank, or of scholarly leisure? Was it, and is it still, his own call? Not "some other man's call which he overheard," as Beecher used to say. I have said, much to the scandal of certain theological deans: "Do not go into the ministry if you can keep out of it." But I was so frequently misunderstood that I found I had to make definite explanation. And so I hasten to say that what I mean is this: If you can be happy in a professor's chair, in law, in medicine, or in business, by all means keep out of the ministry. For otherwise you are quite likely to see your college chum, who went into business or the law, getting thrice your salary and being



equally honoured and respected, and you will say, in your straitened circumstances: "I, too, might have had all that. I might have had the honour and the respect of the community, and at the same time the ability to send my children around the world and to take for myself all the comforts which affluence can bring." So you will be unhappy. You will be feeling that you have not had a fair chance, and you will grow increasingly dissatisfied and troubled. Very soon your people will feel it, and instead of being advanced, as you feel you ought to be, some of your people will be inclined to think that you are in a position already beyond your ability to fill. But if you felt that you had to answer in the affirmative the call of God to the Christian ministry, and that you could not have done otherwise and saved your soul alive, then you will be happy in the most adverse circumstances. For you will realize that to put yourself in the place to which God has called you, and to be certain that you have His constant presence and aid, is a greater joy to you than any emolument which might come from trade or position.

As one sits down in his study with his work opening before him, he must carefully discriminate as to the circumstances of the work to which he is called. He may get the impression that he was called to be primarily a preacher or a scholar or a literary critic or a social reformer. But interesting and excellent though all these things may

#### 44 Motives and Methods in Modern Evangelism

be, no one of them, nor all of them together, constitutes the chief function of the Christian *minister*. A sermon is not an end; it is only a means to an end. Scholarship is not the ultimatum of the minister's life. All literary values and scientific attainments are to be translated into life—into influence for good. They are of value chiefly as they give a man power to do the one thing to which he was called by the grace of God—"called to be a minister and a witness." It is this that is the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. Whatever else a man may be, he must be both minister and witness, or else he cannot properly aspire to recognition as a pastor and a minister. The "high calling" means to win men from darkness to light. It means to realize that the kingdom of God is first within you before it becomes articulate in changed customs and manners and laws around you. Everything that a pastor does is to take form, as did the actions of Jesus, in transformed lives.

If you will study the table talk of Jesus, you will find that He did much dining out—and people charged it to His discredit—while John was an ascetic, Jesus was a man who enjoyed social life. His enemies said of Him that He was a glutton and a winebibber. But you will notice that in all His after-dinner speaking there was only one message—the message of one who had come to seek and to save that which was being lost. Whether

He spoke at the house of Simon the leper, or at the house of Simon the Pharisee, or at the dinner of Matthew the Publican, He was still saying that He had a mission to seek those who were lame and blind and corrupted, to the end that He might, as a good physician, minister not to the well but to the sick.

So wherever the pastor goes the one thing upon his mind should be, how can I best bring the message which as a high commissioner from God I ought to bring to those who have refused His authority and trampled upon His love? It is in the study that the evangelistic note and impulse must lay hold of the pastor's heart. He is there to find strength to perform functions which fall upon him as a director of public morals, or of private experiences, and it is there he is to gain power to become a minister in holy things to those who need him so much. As he reads literature, he must read it to find its message to the unsaved and the indifferent. As he faces the social problem of his age, his constant query must be, how can these be so ordered as to be blessed of God to a nobler spiritual life in the community? As he takes up his Bible, he must not be content simply to read it in an ancient language as a pleasant pastime, to exploit his knowledge of a classic. Nor must he read it simply as a critic, to contend over questions of higher or lower criticism apart from their pragmatic value. Nor must he be content to read

## 46 Motives and Methods in Modern Evangelism

it only for the peace which it brings to his own heart as he meditates on the rapt and mystical meaning of its psalms and prophecies.

While all these have their value, and at times will play their part in the work to which he is called, the one chiefest message of the Bible to him is the message of the Gospel. That is, the message of Christ as a Saviour foreshadowed in the Old Testament, revealed in the lives of all those patriarchs and prophets whom God had called to be workers together with Him in the upbuilding of the world and supremely revealed in His only begotten Son, and set forth in never-to-be-forgotten brilliance and power in the transformed lives of those who were lepers and blind, who were crippled and impotent, and who were dead in trespasses and in sins.

No man can have a message big enough for souls in need who has not fed upon the Word of God until it appears in every drop of his blood and in his every breath which proclaims the message that God has given him. And he comes to feel himself straitened until he shall have delivered the message to dying men which Jesus asked him to bring in His name. Into that preparation of the study for the supreme task of the minister's life there are so many things that enter. Nothing will be more vital than the life of prayer which he lives in that secret chamber. To have first-hand information from the Maker of the world and the

Father of our spirits, to receive such esoteric messages as come only to those who are in tune with the Infinite, to translate into the thoughts of man the heart of God as it is revealed to him at the threshold of prayer, to wait there in his tryst until the Master Himself draws near, and to cry in waiting faith:

“Nay, but I will be found  
Dead at the threshold of thy mercy,  
With the ring of thy door in my hand.”

So, with the message from the Book and with the deep revelation of those who have sought the face and favour of God, a man's heart will be made rich and tender for mighty experiences.

We all love to read the story of victorious lives. The Bible is in a real sense little more than the biographies of men and women who have had fellowship with God, who have done His will, or else have repudiated His call. Here we find the story of the victories of faith and the overthrow of doubt and sin. To read the lives of the early Church fathers; to see how God moved upon the hearts of those who have moved the world; to find how some simple message or incident has transformed the lives of men and enabled them to transform the generation in which they have lived—all this is of thrilling interest, and all this and more is a part of what we call the evangelistic preparation of the study.

## VII

### THE EVANGELISM OF THE PULPIT

**W**HAT shall be the pulpit themes for an evangelistic ministry, and how shall they be treated? If any one will be at pains to examine the topics which are announced in the daily papers as themes for pulpit ministration, he cannot be blamed for feeling that the pulpit has fallen to unimportant if not trifling themes. When one goes to hear some pulpit ministrations there is a marching up the hill and marching down again, but this is only form without power. As the themes are secondary and unimportant, so the treatment is unconvincing and uninteresting. Some of it, indeed, is fairly well done, but it was not worth the doing. A trained and cultivated man in one of the greatest educational institutions maintained by our government recently said of a preacher that he had no message to meet the needs of the hour. His was a mediocre attempt to catch the interest of the audience from a literary standpoint. There were a few arts of the stage, with an attempt to be dramatic in places, but these had no evidence of careful preparation, and the speaker was but a tyro in their use. Nothing was aimed at, so how could there be a center shot? There was no attempt to

win a verdict, so how could there have been any connected argument or any impressive appeal? People are saying that the days of pulpit power are gone, yet only the other day a man of ripe experience, who had heard the greatest orators in America for forty years, after listening to a minister's preaching exclaimed: "That sermon is the greatest sermon to which I ever listened—and I have heard Beecher and Talmage and Brooks and the rest of them."

Never was there a time when a great preacher could get a better hearing than now, and never was there a time when great preaching was more needed. But great preaching needs great thinking and great feeling, and it has often been proved that

"The heart is wiser than the intellect  
And works with swifter hands and surer feet  
Toward wise conclusions."

Ours is no time for social platitudes and amenities. The heart of the world is sick with sin and its consequences—sin with the futility of unanswered materialism, with pride and accumulation and indolent satiety. The cry goes out, "These be thy gods, O Israel!" and men stand shivering around altars on which the fires have gone out, and the priests of Jehovah seem to be as impotent as the ancient priests of Baal in their attempts to call down the heavenly fires.

## 50 Motives and Methods in Modern Evangelism

Men are turning away from the ministry to-day not because of lack of pay, not because of the self-denials which fill the path, but because a cold and spiritless theology has cut the nerve of the old-time challenge of the Gospel. Theological students by the score are turning from the pulpit to welfare work and social settlements and clerical positions because, when destructive criticism had done its work, there seemed nothing left worth preaching. How can one have the passion of his Lord if there is nothing in him over which to have that passion? How could a man imitate a Bunyan "preaching like a man in chains to men in chains" when he hearkened to men teaching that sin is only virtue in development, and that a sinner by his own strength may hope to be some day quite a decent man?

One of our great college presidents, lamenting the decline in preaching, quotes the words of the Dean of St. Paul's: "What the world sorely needs, if it is to have its religious convictions deepened and its faith made more sure, is another St. Dominic or St. Francis, another Wesley or Whitefield, another Newman or Pusey, or Keble, another Lacordaire. The religion of modern men will not survive if fed on husks alone." Quite true; but what was the impelling power which made the men to whom reference is made so mighty that, though centuries have passed since their work was accomplished, they still stand as the representatives of



a power which the world felt and owned and will never forget?

Look at Wesley preaching the terrors of a sin-cursed world until the tears made white furrows upon the grimy cheeks of the miners of Cornwall; see how twenty thousand people on Boston Common were so deeply stirred by the matchless call of the Saviour as Whitefield presented it that they renounced all to follow Him; the pastor of Old South Church said that more people had come to him in fifteen days seeking light on their soul's salvation than in fifteen years before.

We cannot move others until we ourselves are moved. We cannot preach a Gospel adequate for the needs of men until we ourselves have felt its power. The object of each sermon must bulk larger than the subject of it; we must be anxious not so much to defend theories as to save men. We need to preach once more the great themes which the New Testament unfolds.

The Bible contains unanswered questions which every minister should study until he finds the only true answer that can be given. "What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" "How shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation?" "If the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the sinner and the ungodly appear?" "Who may abide the day of his coming, and who shall stand when he appear-eth?" We need in the pulpit more trumpets and

fewer flutes. We need to pull out the diapason. It is the Evangel of the Son of God which alone can stir the hearts of men; and the only way to bring back the power and challenge where the pulpit has lost it, is to be able to answer the ringing question which comes up from the pews, "Is there any message from the Lord?" with the ringing affirmation: "There is. Thus saith the Lord!"

Sir William Robertson Nicoll said, shortly before his death: "It is the preacher's business to seek for conversions and decisions. Without these seals he must count himself unhappy and unprofitable. Preachers do not, as they used to do, beseech men with much entreaty to receive the gift of God. They may state the truth of salvation, but they do so without pressing it on their hearers. They assume the take-it-or-leave-it attitude. The consequence is that the Church does not grow, but rather decreases, and the confession of Christ is rarer and rarer among men.

"There are sermons which even by a miracle could hardly be made into a channel of grace, but when the preacher apprehends the solemnity of the issues with which he is dealing, how great is the change! There is such a thing as conversion, and if conversions are seriously and prayerfully sought for, they will come. The Holy Ghost has no subject but the Cross, and when this Cross is preached He works on the spiritually dead and makes the soul a new creation. How many of us remember

how in the days of our youth a new life began for us, even life from the dead? There are so many who go to our churches and chapels and come back disappointed because there is no aim apparent to bring about real and practical and divine conversions."

## VIII

### APPEASELESS SOUL HUNGER

**A** LEADER of the Church, who has not only written history but made it, affirms that the secret of Wesley's great movement which changed the spiritual life of England was "appeaseless soul hunger." After that never-to-be-forgotten day, the 24th of May, 1738, a new life was begotten in John Wesley. After that, Burrell says of him, "He became out of breath pursuing souls," and that ardour never cooled in his life until he ceased at once to labour and to live. At eighty-eight, "in age and feebleness extreme," he is preaching his last sermon, and this is his text, "Seek ye the Lord while he may be found; call upon him while he is near." So it was true of him that he died evangelizing. He had entered into fellowship with his Lord, and henceforth his life had but one consuming motive. Nor was he alone in that overmastering passion. Whitefield, his fellow and associate, who was with him in the Oxford Club, and who set the pace for him in field preaching, had the same consuming passion. They had felt the thrill of Pentecost, and they heard the call of their ascending Lord, "Go quick everywhere—and, lo, I am with you, even unto the end of the world! "

It was the same soul hunger which Francis of Assisi felt; the same which John Knox and his son-in-law expressed when they cried together, "Give me Scotland, or I die." No man has ever amounted to much in the spread of the Kingdom of God who did not feel the thrill of it. The hunger and thirst after righteousness is the beatitude which is possible to us all; and having experienced it in its fulness, we cannot be content until others have come into the Kingdom of God's grace through the same open door. Richard Watson Gilder, with his singing robes around him, sends out his challenge to the Church:

"Increase Thy prophets, Lord!

Give strength to smite

Shame to the laggard and the sloth—

Give them the yearning for human souls

That burned in Wesley's breast!"

Jonathan Edwards had found it, and America owes more to him religiously than to any man in the first hundred years of our national life. It was Jonathan Edwards who brought Whitefield to America; it was Jonathan Edwards who cried out in the depths of his longing for power with God and man, "If it were revealed to me that in any age of the world's history there could be only one man in that day who would in all particulars fulfill the will of God, I would strive that in my age I might be that man."

The influence of Finney, ablaze for God, started influences in America which after a hundred years still throb in the breast of the Church. It was the yearning for souls which made Moody have an ambition there should be one man who would be so completely consecrated to God that He could use him to the full of all his powers. It was that appeaseless soul hunger which sent great missionaries to their holy task and changed the face of China and India and the islands of the sea. It made a great missionary exclaim, "I have been long in kindling my torch, now let me burn out for God."

What thrilling history moves our souls as we think of Livingstone and Adoniram Judson, and the men who for a hundred years and more have felt that thrill and who would not accept deliverance from the holy task sealed with their life. George Romanes, the great skeptic, came back to faith not because of the argument of a theologian, but because he saw a life so filled with passion for the souls of men that all selfish interests and even love of friends were lost sight of, that a faithful missionary might go back once more to certain death, in order that he might bring others to the life eternal.

No one will accuse Dr. Jefferson of undue emotion or of choosing words carelessly, but he said not long ago, concerning the preaching of to-day, "Bright things, true things, helpful things are said

in abundance, but the spiritual passion is lacking. The service smacks of time and not of eternity. The atmosphere of the sermon is not that of Mt. Sinai or Mt. Calvary, but that of the professor's room or the sanctum of the editor. The old tone of the 'Thus saith the Lord' of the Hebrew prophets is everywhere lacking. Men are everywhere waiting for it, but in many churches they have thus far waited for it in vain."

"It has been the sin of my life," said Burton of Yale, "that I have not always taken aim. I have been a lover of subjects. If I had loved men, and loved subjects only as God's instruments of good for men, it would have been better, and I should have more to show for all my labour under the sun."

A lament comes to us from the pulpit of Free St. Georges in Edinburgh, from brave old Alexander Whyte, whose influence was second to none in Scotland, saying in substance that he wonders he has been so little moved with holy passion, and that if he had his life to live over again he would have a ministry of spiritual yearning. Nor is he alone in that expression. When the superannuated preachers of one of our country's great conferences were asked to leave their testimony for those who should follow in their footsteps, they left as their unanimous testimony that if they could begin once more their ministry they would magnify, beyond anything which they had done, the voice of the glori-

ous Gospel calling men everywhere to repentance and faith.

When we go to our beds for the last time, we shall not dwell with special delight upon those sermons which men call great or those messages which met the requirements of philosophy, psychology or homiletics, of logic or of rhetoric; the messages whose memory will put life under the ribs of death will be those of which we could say in some humble way, as the Master said of His, "The words which I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life."

Then we shall measure our sermons not in terms of the schools but in the terms of life; not in terms of intellectual quickening but in terms of spiritual transformation. Is it not a wonder that, commissioned of God to bear a message of life to dying men, we are so little concerned with the way the message is received? May we not measure the value of our life in terms of life to others? What reward shall we have of all our labours under the sun?

I have seen the passing of the pulpiteer. For a time he flourished like a green bay tree, but he passed away and, lo, he was not. I sought him diligently, and he could not be found. There was a story of some hour when men applauded him, but they came at last to see that his great sermons were like cypress trees—beautiful of form, but they bore no fruit. Paul hungered so for the



spiritual life of those to whom he had been sent that he could wish himself accursed for his companions' and brethren's sake. He would be willing to die eternally if any thus might live.

Of course, if there is no difference between "him who serveth God and him who serveth him not," if there is no difference between those who are dead in trespasses and sin and those who are alive in Christ Jesus, it will make little matter what we say or do. But if it is true that "he who winneth souls is wise"; if it is true that he that "turneth a sinner from the error of his ways shall save a soul from death and hide a multitude of sins," then how supremely important it is that we should nourish the celestial fire in our own hearts, that we should bring, with a persistence which nothing can daunt, the message of life which we are commissioned of God to give, that we should arrest men in the highway of their sin, that we should seek those who are going astray, that we should be good shepherds of the sheep, carrying the lambs in our bosom and journeying far for those who have wandered in desert places—if so be that we may bring them back with rejoicing, or at least fulfill the holy description of a good shepherd which the Master has given: "The good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep."

If there is failure in any man's ministry, the chief element in that failure is not social or intellectual, but spiritual. No man can be a good

## 60 Motives and Methods in Modern Evangelism

pastor unless he goes to his task abating no jot of heart or hope or toil or self-denial, that he may win those for whom he yearns and hungers. It is the note of appeaseless soul hunger of which the world feels the need. Nothing will take its place, nothing will fit a man for his ministry, nothing can change the miseries of men and meet the needs of the hour, but that same spiritual yearning through which a man counts not his own life dear unto himself, but gives himself as a mother gives herself for a suffering child or as a father yearns over a prodigal son. Arnold understood it when he wrote *East London*:

“I met a preacher there I knew, and said:

‘Ill and o’erworked, how fare you in this scene?’

‘Bravely!’ said he; ‘for I of late have been  
Much cheer’d with thoughts of Christ, *the living  
bread.*’”

## IX

### THE BANISHMENT OF FEAR

**W**HEN the poor fellow with one talent presented his apology for his failure it was in three words, "I was afraid." Fear cuts the nerve of everything that is worth while. When the faithless spies came back, it was fear that had slain them and, through them, all whom they deceived. The epitaph which sad-eyed angels would be fain to carve on the grave of the world's worst failures would be, in most cases, "I was afraid."

Fear bringeth a snare, fear palsies the arm, fear deadens the heart, fear puts lions in the way, fear fills the graves of the ruined and forgotten.

But why are you afraid to make the great adventure for God and Man?

1. "I distrust my own ability." So did Moses, so have prophets and saints without number. If you go to the task in your own strength, you will probably fail, and you would deserve to fail. Jesus said, "I will make you fishers of men." "My grace is sufficient for thee." Wait until you hear His call to faith and victory. Then you can say, "Here am I, send me."

2. "I do not feel that I am good enough or

devoted enough to ask anybody else to be a Christian. My past and my present both palsy my lips. When I try to ask others to Christ, I seem to hear them saying, 'Why don't you get there yourself?' " Sure enough, why don't you! Could anything be better for you than to realize that every selfish and wicked thing you do will not only harm your own soul but it will ruin your chances of helping other people? They that bear the vessels of the Lord must themselves be pure. "Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord, or who shall stand in his holy place? He that hath clean hands and a pure heart, who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully." The faithless spies said, "We were as grasshoppers in our own sight." You have still conscience enough that you say, "Suppose everybody knew what my thoughts and practices are?" And they do know more than you think they do. You bear the mark of your secret sin in a furtive eye, in speech that is void of connection, in acts that proclaim that your service is formal and that your heart is not in it. If everybody knew, nobody would want any direction from you. Why shouldn't you be afraid? The bony hand of the skeleton is already pressed against your closet door, and any minute he may open it and come forth, to your consternation or destruction. If your fear arises from such a present it is well for you to give good heed. The fear of God is the beginning of wisdom.

3. "I am afraid I cannot succeed." Your inexperience is father to that fear. The only way to destroy the fear is to make the venture. Experience begets confidence, and nothing else can do it. The only way to learn how to play a piano, or how to play golf or tennis is to practice. Books cannot make you a master. How does a man become a physician or a lawyer or a public speaker, or a fencer or a fisherman? Practicing, always practicing. Everybody has to begin, and to begin where he is. Take the first step, and keep on walking in the way, and you find it growing brighter and brighter unto the perfect day. But it must not be forgotten that as the lawyer must study law in order to practice it, and the physician study medicine before he practices it, so must you prepare yourself. Matthew records in the seventeenth chapter of his Gospel the failure of the disciples to heal a poor lunatic boy. When the disciples, chagrined at their incompetency, ask Jesus, "Why is it?" He replies in substance, "You haven't paid the price. You are of no account until you have. This kind cometh not forth but by prayer and fasting." That is only a very partial description of the price. Be well assured there is nothing that comes so high as power with God and man.

4. Fear of rebuff or failure. Many do not press a personal message upon their friends because they think it will be unwelcome. When

## 64 Motives and Methods in Modern Evangelism

asked to press the matter of personal salvation upon a bank president, another bank president said, "I don't dare to do it. It would destroy a lifelong friendship. We have business dealings almost every day, but he would have nothing to do with me if I talked to him about religion."

"Do you know what he is saying about you as a Christian man?"

"No."

"He is saying that if you were the Christian you claim to be, you would not have done business with him for thirty years and never mentioned the most important thing that men talk about, and which he had hoped you would have presented to him long ago."

A minister was invited by a friend to go with him on a yachting trip for a week, which invitation he accepted. They talked about all sorts of things in art and business and literature, but the minister feared that if he talked about personal religion his kind friend would resent it. So, while he read his Bible in the other man's presence, and bowed his head at meals for a silent grace, he did not present the matter of personally accepting Christ. They had a delightful trip, sailing, fishing, and chatting. As the time came near to separate the minister thought his friend seemed a little quiet, as if something might be on his mind, but nothing was said. A few days after their return they met on the street; the yachtman said to the

minister, "There is something on my mind that I want to tell you. Do you know why I invited you to spend the week aboard the yacht? I invited you because I thought that in the intimate relation which we should have you would say something to me about my soul. I had heard you preach and was tremendously moved, but you never said a single word that forced me to the decision I ought to have made. We had a pleasant time, but as far as my purpose was concerned, it was a failure."

The minister expressed his surprise and sorrow, and attempted to explain. He urged the man to do at once what he had hoped to do before, but he could not move his friend. The reply was, "No; my time has passed. I don't feel as I did. I shall probably die as I am." And he did. The minister learned a lesson he never forgot.

Don't fail to do your whole duty with fear. God will take care of any consequences if you do your duty. It was a trying time when Wendell Phillips spoke at the risk of his life about the burning question of slavery. His wife accompanied him to the door as he was going to face a crowd which might become a mob and even hang him. The little woman clung to the arm that was dearer to her than life, but she said, "Wendell, don't shilly-shally!" Shall an ambassador of the Living God shrink from fear?

## X

### UNCONSCIOUS EVANGELISM

**T**HIS is personal evangelism raised to the *n*th degree. It gets its value from the yearning of the soul that is behind it. "We will go down to the town and preach," said Francis of Assisi to a novice. They walked through the streets and the markets, they spoke to the labourers and to the poor, they greeted strangers by the way, and as they came to climb the hill on the return to the monastery the novice asked, "Father, when shall we begin to preach?" "We have been preaching all the time," said St. Francis.

If the "little unremembered acts of kindness" are the largest part of a good man's life, so a good man's soul is mirrored in a happy, yearning face. The soft answer that turns away wrath may break down more opposition to the good news than all arguments and importunity. It is such solicitude that expresses itself as unwearyingly as a mother's love, it is kindness which opens the heart which thoughtless people have shut. When asked, "What argument convinced you that Jesus was the Messiah?" a convert from Judaism replied, "No argument; just the kindness of some Christian people."



A mighty athlete on the campus who would not take advantage and who would play the game like a brother, a business man who would not sell himself for an extra nickel a yard, a man wronged who would not wrong another, a man dying in his tracks rather than deny his Lord, a man living in self-denial for Christ's sake, who might have lived in affluence, in sin—all these voice that love and devotion which changes the face of the world.

It is the unpremeditated and uncalculated devotion that brings victory. Napoleon said that what the army needed was "two o'clock in the morning courage"—courage when nobody was looking, when there was nobody to report to the commanding general, or the newspapers. It was the shadow of Peter passing by, the touch of his handkerchief that he had stained with the tears he shed, maybe on the beach at Ephesus, that would charm away the voices of evil. In classic story when they tried to pass the island of the sirens, the prudent Ulysses filled his ears with wax, so that he might not hear their sorceries, and he fastened the sailors to the mast, so that they could not flee to the sirens. But when Orpheus, sweetest of singers, passed that way, he struck up a melody so sweet that the sirens themselves were charmed and stopped their singing to listen, and thus the voyagers sailed by in safety. Face to face with the sirens thongs may be good, but songs are better.

It is our own helplessness that makes cowards of us all. We have not the courage to ask others to do what we are not willing to do ourselves. We dally and neglect, and indecision slays us. Every faithful pastor has had scores of men say to him, when he had approached them with a yearning heart, "You are the first man who ever put himself out to get me to give myself to Jesus Christ." Men by the thousands are slipping down to darkness and death because no man hath cared enough for their souls to seek them out in a simple and effective way, and personally influence and tenderly constrain them to do that which their own hearts had been desiring many a time to do; but no one has been near when the water was troubled to help them into the pool. Would it not seem likely that when God had moved upon the heart of the eunuch to study the word, He would also have moved upon the heart of Philip to seek out the man who was seeking the truth, and so bring him the message of life? What would have happened, when the eunuch read, if there had been no Philip to open the message of the book? If we fail to listen to the constraining call of God which is on our heart to seek men who are seeking Him, will not the result be unspeakably sad—if we are found wanting in the day when we might have led them into the light? It was doubtless the unconscious evangelism of the martyred Stephen which prepared the heart of Saul to answer as he did to

the yearning cry, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" when he was riding on at the top of his hate.

Stanley went in search of Livingstone in the heart of Africa at the call of James Gordon Bennett of *The New York Herald*. He was a godless reporter, knowing and caring nothing about religion. When he found Livingstone he said, "He must be daft, to waste his life here among these savages when he might be fêted and honoured in the world's capitals." But constant association with a man who had enthroned Christ as his Lord so moved the wicked reporter that, though Livingstone never broached the matter of religion, Stanley yielded his life to Livingstone's Christ and found in the jungle in the life of a consecrated man what he had missed in the crowded street.

In all ages there has been an unceasing influence for good which has surrounded a noble life. The very "shadow of Peter passing by" has had healing in it. When Phillips Brooks walked down Newspaper Row of a Monday morning the reporters said that the sun shone, even if it had been cloudy before. The Shunammite woman was fain to have a chamber on the wall for the prophet of God, for she said, "I perceive that this is a holy man of God who passeth by us continually."

## XI

### PREPARATION FOR THE EVANGEL

**W**HAT better preparation for the evangel can there be than the contemplation of Him who is the evangel! The center of our religion is not a creed but a Personality, and of that Personality it was said, "His name shall be called Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins." Here is "new news and old news and good news." The longer I preach, the more impressed I become with the fact that if I am to help the world I must present Jesus Christ—not some theories about Him, not some facts of history or biography, but Him alone.

Dean Brown of Yale calls our attention to the fact that there are two views of His person. "One view holds Him to be a great man, possibly the wisest, the best and the greatest man who ever lived. He was a matchless teacher, a perfect example of purity and kindness, of heroism and unselfish devotion." He had moral courage which stopped at nothing, and He sealed His own high convictions with His blood. Though He was such a man, great and wonderful, you could not pray to a man like that or worship him. There is quite a different view, which I share. He was not simply

the son of Mary with influence; He was the Son of God with power. In Him God became flesh and dwelt among us. He is the One whom I adore and worship. In His name I offer my prayers unto the Father. He is to me not only my example but He frees me from the guilt, the dominion, and the love of sin. His Cross is to me the center where history begins and from which flows the stream for the world's redemption.

“In the Cross of Christ I glory,  
Towering o'er the wrecks of time;  
All the light of sacred story  
Gathers round its head sublime.”

Now, this is what we are trying to experience as our preparation for the evangel, and this is to be the high note which we are to sound—Jesus Christ and Him crucified.

One of the leaders of the Church used to say there were three scenes he would like to have witnessed—Moses at the Red Sea, Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration and Paul preaching on Mars Hill. It would have been thrilling beyond words to have witnessed either scene, though in the life of each person there were other events that would have been more challenging to me. So far, however, as St. Paul is concerned, that sermon on Mars Hill was about the most inadequate and futile of any sermon he ever preached, so far as we have any record. It has a good argument for

the fatherhood of God, for His immanence and for the brotherhood of men, but, as McIntosh observes, "In no part of it is any attention given to the distinctive Christian message. In this studied omission of the Cross is the secret of his comparative failure at Athens." You will recall that he never established a church in Athens, as he did at Ephesus and Corinth and elsewhere. Learning wisdom doubtless by his mistake in Athens, he never made the same mistake again. To the men of Corinth he wrote: "I determined to know nothing among you but Jesus Christ and him crucified." The best thing about Paul's preaching was Paul's experience. There was something there that could not be doubted. The impression of it was so mighty as to change his being through and through. It enabled him to say truthfully to Agrippa, "Wherefore I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision." He had experienced a fact, and all theories must shape themselves under that fact.

"Not what I do believe, but Whom."

It is the preaching of Corinth, not of Athens, that will save the world.

If in our preaching we dwell especially on *what* we believe, we shall very likely split our congregation into two or ten; but, as Dr. Jones affirms in *The Christ of the Indian Road*, "If our emphasis is 'whom,' then we are all drawn together at the place of this Central Magnet." How true

it is, and how glorious, "And I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me"! Here is the heart and center of the evangel. It is the preparation which comes from this personal experience that must precede our evangel, or we shall fail, and the world will be undone. Let us thank God: "He is able to save unto the uttermost all those who come to God by him."

In *The Everlasting Mercy* John Masefield tells of a humble Quaker woman who went the rounds of the public houses in an English village, to try to rescue some brands from the burning. One poor poacher and drunkard, when in his cups, insulted the quiet Quakeress with vile and ribald talk. With the yearning of her Master in her soul and the solicitude of a mother in her eyes, she took the glass of rum from the poacher's hand and spilled it in the dust of the floor.

"Saul Kane," she said, "when next you drink  
Do me the gentleness to think  
That every drop of drink accursed  
Makes Christ within you die of thirst,  
That every dirty word you say  
Is one more flint upon His way,  
Another thorn about His head,  
Another mock by where He tread,  
Another nail, another cross.  
All that you are is that Christ's loss."

And then the shameless sinner felt a strange power lay hold upon him, and you will want to read about it:

## 74 Motives and Methods in Modern Evangelism

“I did not think, I did not strive,  
The deep peace burnt my me alive;  
The bolted door had broken in,  
I knew that I had done with sin.  
I knew that Christ had given me birth  
To brother all the souls on earth,  
And every bird and every beast  
Should share the crumbs broke at the feast.”



## XII

### GUIDING A SOUL TO CHRIST

**W**HAT is the best way to win a soul to Christ? This will depend on the individual. Different people have different estimates of values in argument and evidence. Witness the fact that with the same witnesses examined and with the same admitted facts before them, the Supreme Court of the United States, supposed to be capable of knowing law and weighing evidence, will divide on some very important matter, five to six. The same facts have different relative values to different men. A lawyer in a jury trial studies each man on the jury. He sees by the wavering interest what line of thought interests each one and to what he remains stolid and indifferent. We must have as much wisdom and perception in pleading for a soul as a lawyer would use with much smaller stakes at issue.

In some way you must find ground which you hold in common, so that your subject will not be braced against you and your purpose. It is seldom that a soul yields to God at the end of an argument. Argument arouses opposition; men brace themselves against it. Men know how to act in order to counteract it.

“ Not, I love because I know ; but,  
Because I love, I know enough.”

The worst man you know, knows more truth than the best man you know practices. You have to get your friend to act up to his convictions. Even in work among college students it is falsely assumed, by college professors themselves, that what a young man needs is argument for Christian evidence. After a long experience with thousands of college students, however, I am convinced that the fault is bedded not in intellectual difficulties but in moral delinquencies and in indifference—which the students seek to justify by appeal to questions of intellect. Since religion is not a theory of any kind, but an experience, of what value is it to enter a field which has in it nothing decisive? If any one denies that Raphael's "Transfiguration" is a great painting, how are you going to convince him? His opinion is as good as yours; at least, in his own sight. One man thinks Whitman is the greatest poet of the last century. You may think as little of him as does Dr. Kelley, but how will you convince your man? You have an appeal in the Christian life that is far removed from the field of intellectual speculation. The world by wisdom knows not God. "If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine," these are Jesus' words.

First get your man kindly disposed to yourself, and so in condition to be moved by your interest

in him. I wanted to reach a multi-millionaire who, I learned, had drifted away from God. But how could I get a common ground, on which he would meet me half-way? He lived in one of the show places of New York and was hedged about with secretaries and servants. I had not even tried to make an appointment, for fear he would deny me. He met me very coldly, and was evidently bored by the thought of giving me even ten minutes, but I told him that I bore a message from one of the friends of his early manhood, who had told me how proud he was of him and who had sent him his love.

In an instant he was a changed man. He grasped my hand and exclaimed: "Oh, tell me about him! He did more for me than any other man. Tell me what he said to you about me." That opened the way to a heart-to-heart talk as to what his old friend had revealed about his early Christian life. The barriers were down. He would not let me go. It was nearly midnight when I fairly tore myself away, and he was a changed man.

I did not argue. I said: "Tell me how you slipped away from the old life. Was it because you lost faith in the Old Book and the old verities of the Christian faith?" His eyes fairly blazed as he replied: "Lost faith in them! No. It is you ministers who have lost faith in them. When I went to church I heard doubts exploited about

the whole basis of Christian life. The names of German professors and theories that I never heard of were thrown at me until I was confused and indignant; and that was supplemented by the temptations of wealth and pleasure. I know the feeling of the men of my class. What we miss is the old appeal to conscience and duty. I would give anything if I could get back the old faith and joy I had—and I must get it back.”

The results of that interview will make me glad as long as I live.

Abraham Lincoln won friends and votes by getting in touch with his neighbours. He could lift a greater weight, sink an axe deeper into a log and tell a story better than they, and they were ready to give him their allegiance for anything. He was their friend. So it was with Roosevelt.

I have won many a college student to Christ by beginning with sports, games and literature; and I have won the confidence of many a farmer by giving him points on fertilizers and crops, vines, fruit trees and spraying, and of many a fisherman by showing him how to wind a rod or make a fly, or dress a fish; and then he had confidence in the message which came out of my heart about the King's business. A successful college athlete has marvellous power to win his fellows to Christ. A successful lawyer, doctor or business man has greater power for God than he realizes. His success gives him a vantage point, a vital point of

contact. Find the place where the thought is open to you, then from a common ground of fellowship you can speak to sympathetic ears of another thing which is of chief interest to you; having won his confidence in the lesser matter, he will be ready to give full value to your experience in divine things, and to welcome the honest solicitude of your soul that he share this great experience with you.

One cannot expect to be a guide along a path ✓ which he has never walked himself. The very first principle which is involved in winning others is that we ourselves must have had a personal experience in the things of God. How do we know that Jesus will save others, if we are not conscious that He has saved us? The greatest creed in the world is the blind man's creed: "This I know that whereas I was blind, now I see." That is a matter that admits of no argument. It is outside the realm of disputation. It is a fact which has so deeply entered into the blind man's life that in the whole range of human knowledge there is nothing else quite so important. So the best thing you can do, when you seek to lead others to Christ, is to tell them how you yourself found Him.

We have already said that you will be met by many objections and excuses, which are not reasons. It will not be hard to find the real difficulty which faces the seeker, and you ought to know your Bible well enough to have at your tongue's end some of its gracious passages which

## 80 Motives and Methods in Modern Evangelism

will have not only the meaning which the words would have if you yourself were behind them, but will have an authority which is quite their own. It is much to know the spirit in which you come. While you shun all controversy, you can at least meet honest doubt and real serious objection in the same spirit in which they are presented. Be prayerful, and be humble. Do not get impatient. Do not adopt the attitude of the Pharisee or look down with an aloofness bordering on contempt upon any one who does not seem to agree with you. Above all, be in dead earnest about the whole matter. Remember that salvation is not at all a matter of feeling; it is a matter of decision.

Here are some passages that may help you as you strive to lead your friend to Christ:

Show him what conversion is. Acts, chapters 8, 9 and 10, will do this.

If you are facing a backslider, turn to Jeremiah 2: 19; 3: 13-14; Hosea 14: 4.

If your friend seems only half interested, turn to Romans 3: 10; 23: 7-24; 1 John 1: 10; Isaiah 53: 6; Acts 13: 39; Galatians 2: 16; Ephesians 2: 8-9.

If he is stumbling over some inconsistent church member, turn to Romans 14: 12; John 21: 21-22; Matthew 7: 1, 3; Romans 2: 1; 14: 3-4.

If he is discouraged by some previous and unsuccessful effort, turn to Romans 4: 5.

If he is afraid he will not hold out, quote 1

Peter 4: 19; 1 Corinthians 10: 13; 2 Corinthians 12: 9; Romans 8: 38-39.

If he is putting the matter off, quote James 4: 13-17; 2 Corinthians 6: 2; Hebrews 3: 13. If he is still skeptical, quote John 6: 40; 7: 17.

If he really wants to know how to believe, turn to John 5: 24; 3: 16; Revelation 22: 17; John 1: 11, 12; Romans 5: 1; Philippians 4: 6-7; Matthew 11: 28, 30.

If they are really asking what they must do to be saved, read to them Acts 3: 19; 4: 12; 17: 30; John 5: 24.

If any are in the stage where the soul is adrift and they are not willing to make the great surrender, turn to Hebrews 2: 3; Luke 13: 3; Proverbs 29: 1; 1: 23-31.

To show what comes with the personal acceptance of Jesus Christ, quote John 1: 12; Revelation 3: 20; Romans 10: 8-10; John 5: 24; Romans 5: 1-2; Ephesians 2: 8, 9; John 1: 12-13; Titus 3: 4-7; Ephesians 2: 4, 5-10; 2 Peter 1: 4; Ephesians 22: 24; Colossians 2: 13-15.

Show them that they are possessors of eternal life through Jesus Christ. Let them read John 3: 36; 5: 24; 10: 27-29; Romans 8: 35-39; 1 Peter 1: 3-5.

Show them the blessed privileges which this new life brings them: 2 Corinthians 6: 18; Revelation 21: 7; John 1: 12-13; Romans 8: 14-16; 8: 17-32; John 17: 21-23; Galatians 1: 27; 2: 2-3.

### XIII

#### PERSONAL EVANGELISM

**S**HERWOOD EDDY says, "It is the growing conviction of many that evangelism, or the winning of men one by one to Christ, is the greatest work in the world." Yet there are many excellent men who shrink from it. Their natural timidity makes it a great cross, and perhaps there is no greater strain upon such people than actually to bring the message of Jesus Christ as the Saviour of men to the attention of their friends in a definite way, asking them to align themselves at once, and to make, with full purpose of soul, the great decision.

There are many who say, "I cannot do evangelistic work." In that they are quite mistaken. Anybody can do it who can talk about any matter of personal concern and bring men to a point of decision—actually selling the thing they have in mind, whether it is stocks or bonds or the surrender of life to high impelling motives. We are not reserved about other matters. It is a selling age. Most of the people in the world seem to have something to sell—the produce from the farm, the manufactures from the mill and the factory, the labour of hands and brain, the printed book, pic-



tures, music, to say nothing of those men who are "selling" Red Cross, Near East, libraries, hospitals, missions and an endless number of good and great causes.

Now, everybody knows, who reflects at all, that Daniel Webster was right when he said that the greatest thought that ever moves one's mind is that of his personal relationship to Almighty God. It is that thought which is behind what we call "Personal Evangelism."

What is evangelism? It is not an emotional thing, nor is it a matter of pure intellect. It is not some cataclysmic experience, as some have vainly taught. Evangelism is the spirit of the evangel, the sending out of the "good news" which centers in Christ. That is a matter of personal experience, and so must depend not on argument but on personal testimony. What do you know about the things of God? What have you experienced concerning those great leadings of the soul which develop life as nothing else can do? It is spiritual force which quickens even intellectual life. Thousands of men and women never thought of going to college until the life of Jesus Christ enwrapped and inflamed their souls. Then they were anxious to make the most of themselves for Christ's sake, for Christ had given Himself for them. They heard Him saying, "If any man will be my disciple, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me." That has been the call

which has changed the face of every age. Martin Luther listened to it and rose from his knees to his feet to carry the good news to Germany and the world. In that he was following out the same call which came to John and Peter in their fishing boats and to Matthew at the receipt of custom, to Augustine, lover of the sensual, and to John Bunyan, the rollicking tinker.

When one has had this experience he has, or he ought to have, an impelling desire to share it with other people. This is the "good news" in a world of disappointments and of tears and of troubles. If a man had a specific for smallpox, he would be to blame if anybody died of that disease within his reach; if a man with a touch could heal cancer or leprosy, he would be justly held responsible if he did not use that power to bless suffering mankind. Now, a man who has felt the touch of the Good Physician cannot hesitate to tell others who suffer how to get relief. All theories yield to fact. Doubt is settled not so much by argumentation as by demonstration. It is the pragmatic test which is to settle the whole question of the world's need.

We talk about truth as the great need in the world, but abstract truth is of little value; it is only applied truth that amounts to anything. It is only felt truth that lays hold of men's lives and lifts them out of the cold bath of intellectualism into the warm glow of life. It is "the truth as it is in Jesus"—saving truth, which is the need of

the hour. The great fundamentals of Christianity have always depended on testimony. It was testimony which convinced the early Church of the resurrected Christ. It was testimony which convinced the world of the power of Pentecost, and the glory of a changed life which men found in a power greater than their own. Jesus Himself was the greatest exponent of personal work. He might have organized societies; He might have sought to change the troubled conditions of His time by social or political propaganda; but He began His work where all successful work must begin—among individuals. He was talking to individuals.

The first chapter of John tells about the founding of Christian society. One man brought his brother. Jesus revealed His character by personal touch, and so opened the glorious chapter of the winning of the world to light and life. Christ's most successful experiences were not with crowds but with individuals. So He won His disciples to the great principles of His Kingdom. The record of the evangelists is in large measure the record of personal interviews. Whether He went with Matthew or Zacchæus, or Simon the Pharisee, His purpose was to win men individually to the new Kingdom. His soul was aglow with a passion for men. He wanted to save them, so He said, "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life." New vistas were opened, a charm untold was in His speech. So the common people

heard Him gladly and were fain to say, "Never man spake like this man."

This was the passion of His soul. Men were going down to death; young men of parts were doing just the same as men of that type are doing now. They were giving themselves to the material, they were dominated by the things which men love. He said that this was not the way of life, but of death. He said that if one continued that way he would become of the earth earthy, the fine rapture of life would be lost, and while men would call him successful and happy, God would say, "You have a name to live, but you are dead." He said this one day to a young man of such rare charm as to win His love. He said to him in substance, "You have the form of godliness, but you have not the power of it. You are smug and comfortable and selfish. If you want to enter into life, if you want to know what life really is, sell what you have and give it to the poor, and come and follow me; and out of your poverty you shall be made rich. Out of your loss you shall come to infinite gain. In giving up your life, you shall find it. But if any man tries to serve himself only, he shall lose the only thing that is worth having; and what shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?"

He was doing this all the time. He began His work that way, and He kept it up to the last. He

made His last convert on His cross, within a few minutes of His death. He did not have some particular time or method. Any time was the right time, and any method that would win was the right method. He did not consider simply His friends, nor did He mind exclusively either the rich or the wise or the poor or the ignorant. He had a message for Nicodemus and the young ruler, and He had one for fishermen. Publicans as well as Pharisees heard Him speak and saw His life and were moved. He loved Martha and Mary, and He also yearned to save Magdalen and the woman of Sychar.

What right have we to call ourselves after Him, to announce ourselves as His followers, unless we really do follow Him in the thing which was most characteristic of Him and which most helped to save men, and so to save society? For we must remember that the "social gospel" about which we talk is a useless thing unless it is rooted in a personal gospel. Every great movement has been the lengthened shadow of a man. Somebody got a conviction, and he told somebody else, and he repeated it, and so the news spread abroad. Jesus was the master individualist of all the ages, but we cannot put on one side the individual and on the other side society, with these two opposed to each other. It is when the individual heart is touched of God that it begins to have a social mind and spirit. The simple fact of one man's

devotion changed the face of the New England colonies and so of America. Lecky says that one single hour in the experience of John Wesley was worth more to England than all the victories of Pitt by land or sea.

No man has a right to call himself a Christian who is not Christlike in this crucial thing. "Draw near, and I will tell you what the Lord hath done for my soul," this is the attitude of mind which the follower of Jesus feels. It is the blind man telling how his eyes were opened; it is the lame man telling how his leaden feet caught the spring of life; it is the leper telling how he was cleansed of his leprosy; it is the testimony of the man dead in transgressions and sins who tells how light broke into his soul and how all life was changed. That is the religion of Jesus—not an intellectual conception about things, but a personal experience of life; that was what Jesus meant when He said, "I am come that you might have life, and that you might have it more abundantly."

We try to drive men into the Kingdom with the butt end of a syllogism. We ought to be more scientific. If you are talking about science, it is scientific proof you want, but in the realm of the spirit, it is spiritual proof you must have. That is the only kind of testimony that amounts to anything. So it happens that God has used humble people to convict and convert men of mighty intellectual power. Experience is better than a

thousand theories. The way of salvation is so simple that wayfaring men need not err, and for that reason the humblest Christian is armed with power divine. Some philosopher might call his philosophy in question, but when men see those who were born blind standing among them seeing, it is no longer a question of philosophy and theory, or even theology—it is a question of fact wrought out in a transfigured life.

So these are the reasons why the greatest thing on earth to win men to God is the personal touch. That is the reason why to-day, as in the long ago, it is the prophet's heart against the heart of the seeker that brings life. When one realizes that it is the very essence and heart of Christianity to spread the good news of light and life, he will put a new evaluation upon himself, and undertake what Jesus has made fundamental, the winning of men to the Christ life by the Christian's testimony.

## XIV

### EVANGELISM AND THE MODERN MIND

**T**HE modern mind is coming at last to understand what evangelism really is. For a time it made the mistake of identifying emotionalism with evangelism. When it spoke of an evangelist, it seemed to see an untrained, narrow propagandist, without any real intellectual qualification to be a leader or guide of the people. Even thoughtful professors put evangelism over against education, as if each were the enemy of the other. Such men forgot who the historic evangelists of the ages were; they forgot that the Luthers and the Wesleys and the Finneys were the best trained men of their times and that the thing which gave Spurgeon, Parker, Simpson, Beecher, Robertson and Brooks their power was the glorious evangelistic note which they sounded.

There is, also, a modern misconception as to the message which was preached a generation or a century ago. We are told that in those days men affirmed that the supreme thing in life was to get ready for death and that each person must look after his own soul without regard for the souls or lives of other people. All that is a libel upon the preaching of those days. Who were the lead-



ers in the American pulpit of that age? They were Finney and Taylor and Simpson and Beecher and Storrs and Abbott and Brooks. No one of these ever promulgated such an idea of Christian life. Speaking to the old-time preachers of the Presbyterian Church, North and South, at their General Assemblies, to Baptist and Methodist preachers, to ministers of other denominations, and to those who gather at Northfield, Winona, Chautauqua and other great conferences, I have asked, "Did any of you preachers preach that theology from your pulpit?" and an indignant denial has come from every preacher.

But the verdict does not depend upon their verbal testimony. That they taught men were saved for service is evidenced by the fact that it was under them, for the most part, that the great missionary and philanthropic enterprises of the Church were started. It was their preaching that had developed the conscience of men to such a point that they responded to the appeal for community and world-wide service. The men who are now giving their millions for God and humanity were being trained in church and Sunday-school under their teaching, and were learning from their fathers and mothers trained under an earlier generation of preachers, that they must first get right themselves with God and then dedicate their substance and themselves unto His service.

All this is matter of fact and history. He who

## 92 Motives and Methods in Modern Evangelism

realizes that the world has had a yesterday, as well as a to-day and a prospective to-morrow, will seek to gain a thorough knowledge of the spirit and method which has brought to us such success as the Church has now and which makes her to-day, with all her imperfections, the most vital power for righteousness upon the face of the earth.

Having said this, in justice to the memory of those pioneers who blazed the way for later movements and whose words still thrill the world though the lips which spoke them are long since silenced, let us turn frankly to face the new challenge which the new age presents.

That some of the old theological slogans have lost their meaning and value is true. Words which once marshalled the embattled hosts of a militant Church are now unheeded and meaningless. Once uttered as a mighty shibboleth, men to-day only smile at them, and say of those who fared forth with deep conviction and stony determination to the fateful contests of Chalcedon and Nicæa:

“ Their swords are rust,  
Their bones are dust,  
Their souls are with the saints, we trust.”

If those old words have lost their power, what others have taken their place? Are there some stranger and newer words? Are they not as impelling, convicting, imperative as those which put

a steel rod down the spinal column of our fathers? Have we also some great commitments handed down to us from God worth living for and, if necessary, worth dying for? If so, let us examine and evaluate them.

We must have an evangelism that is adequate to meet the problems and needs of to-day. We need new ideals, new motives, new experiences but, most of all, new men—men who have made the great surrender, who have adventured far with God and who have come back with fauna and flora from new fields as proof that their adventure was worth while. We are told that in the light of modern scientific thought and psychological research the evangelist is called on to rethink his message, to revise his methods, to restate his gospel and to relate his appeal to contemporary needs and modes of thought. There is a sense in which this is true, albeit human nature, the gross material on which we work, remains much as it was a millennium ago, and sin and sorrow, however disguised, smite us as of old with stain and pain. But each generation must settle its own questions for itself.

Here are some of the facts which modern evangelism must face, made all the more impressive by the happenings of the past ten years. The awful World War has shown us that materialism is the undoing of the nation or the man who gives it supreme place. It has shown us that all our vaunted culture and civilization have been power-

less to root out our selfishness and passion and hatred. Nay, our terrible deflections from virtue and brotherliness were the direct product of the kind of education and general culture for which the world stood. Our greater culture and development only increased our power to ruin the world. The awful moral cataclysm which accompanied and followed the war makes it more apparent to the modern mind than to that of any other age that the only remedy for the world's moral obtuseness lies in the proclamation of the Evangel—the good news of a power and personality great enough to change the hearts of men. It is so thoughtful a man as Principal Garvey of London who says, "We need social reconstruction and moral reformation, and these will come only by religious revival." Let us by no means ignore or neglect the moral and social implication of the Gospel, but the word for to-day is the word of the Cross. "Christ and His Cross remain for men the center of the Gospel."

We have further discovered that matters of purely intellectual controversy are futile in either settling theological questions or building up a vital Christian life. One of our leading modernists, who has perhaps precipitated quite as much discussion as any one else, says: "When I am not preaching myself, I go to hear some other preachers, and I find that if the sermon is a discussion of some question of doctrine, no matter how bril-

liant the reasoning and whether I agree with the conclusions or not, I come away unmoved and unconvinced; but when the preacher brings me into the presence of Jesus, I am subdued, mastered, conquered."

Does any one suppose that such discussions as have been found in the newspapers of late concerning fundamentalism and evolution have been conducive to a deeper spiritual life or even to a clearer mental appreciation of the truth? Bitter words have been written and spoken, burdens have been laid upon the Church that she ought not to be compelled to bear, and the mind of the people has been turned away from spiritual effort to useless diatribes.

Another of the modern revelations is that doubts concerning religious truth begin not in the mind but in the heart. Jesus said that if any man is minded to know the truth, he can know it. We are coming to realize that Christianity is not a dogma, it is a life; and it is not even a life founded, as some have said, upon a creed. It is a life founded upon an experience. The sufficient answer to all intellectual doubt is a vital Christian experience. St. Paul did not change his course of life because some one made a new and impressive statement of the arguments pointing to Jesus as the Messiah. He had had an experience, and that settled all his doubts. John Wesley changed the face of England because of

such an experience. George Romanes was won back to Christ, when wearied and befogged by intellectual difficulties, by the simple testimony of a man with an experience.

These are the modern statements of the Christian message which we call the Evangel. It is the good news which the men of to-day can have in a form which they can understand, and with a power that will strike the simple solemn and change the lives of men. The modern mind must submit to the arbitrament of fact. It is the pragmatic test that counts. From the standpoint of the Sanhedrin the blind man's answer was of no account, but the ages are agreed that it amounted to a demonstration: "This I know, that whereas I was blind, now I see."

## XV

### EVANGELISM AND THE STUDENT MIND

**I**T is a fine thing for every preacher and teacher to remember, in his dealings with young people, that he was once young himself. Why should he be disturbed by the ill-considered answers and the intellectual vagaries which he finds among young people to-day? His own intellectual processes were no more mature than theirs when he was at the same point in life. When he was a sophomore, he spake as a sophomore, he understood as a sophomore, and it is not every one who puts away sophomoric things when he becomes a man. We learn what little wisdom we have not so much from books as in the school of experience, and although in that school tuition comes high, the lessons of it are about the only lessons we remember through life. Our young people will have to pay the same price that we paid. When Mr. Valiant-for-Truth came down to the end of his journey he said, "My sword I give to him who shall succeed me in my journey; my courage and skill to him who can get it; my marks and scars I carry with me, to be my token that I have fought His battles who will now be my Rewarder."

We cannot bequeath our experience, we cannot make a legacy of our courage and skill; that each man must develop for himself. It has always been

the fashion for youth to regard lightly the intellectual positions of its elders. We were doubtless, in our youth, very much of the opinion of Dr. Osler, that a man of forty had better be chloroformed; he was fast hastening toward the fossil age when he would be of little use. It is quite the fashion to believe that the ages before us had neither men nor thoughts which are worth while for us to contemplate, but the same men who a few years ago were saying and thinking these things have discovered that they were mistaken, that there was a day before yesterday and that there will probably be a day after to-morrow.

It is quite true that the humblest sophomore could tell Socrates and Paul many things which these men never knew, but if a youth has read the *Phaedo* of Plato, or the Epistle to the Romans, with any care, he has discovered that if Socrates or Paul were pitted against the leaders in college debates to-day the ancients would be easy winners.

The great thing which, it seems to me, we ought to strive to make plain to our young people in school and college, in matters of religion, is that the great fundamental human beliefs in every field are essentially the outgrowth and formulations of life rather than conclusions of a syllogism.

“Myself when young did eagerly frequent  
 Doctor and saint and heard great argument  
 About it and about; but ever more came out  
 By the same door wherein I went.”



Professor Borden P. Bowne, a leading philosopher in American life for the present generation, has said, "We have come to see that belief roots in life rather than logic. What a man believes will depend less upon the acuteness of his intellect than upon the manner of man he is, the fundamental interests and tendencies of his nature. In ethical, social, political and scientific fields as well as in religion, life is first and fundamental. As this life unfolds, the understanding seeks to formulate and express it; but the work of the understanding is merely regulative. It gives form to a content which it cannot produce. Religion has been a long time in the world.

"Cities without walls, cities without libraries, cities without schools, cities without music, cities without art, but never a city without its place of worship:" so the anthropologist is telling us. Places of worship everywhere, the moods which created them belonging to all races of men.

Perhaps America has had no man in the last generation more scientifically accurate in his thinking than John Fiske. He says, "I cannot believe that the law and order of things fails at the top and that while we live in a real world in our physical relationships and a true world in our mental action, we live only in a lie or a vacuum in the insights and confidence of the soul."

Do not be disturbed if they tell you that the student mind is even questioning whether there

## 100 Motives and Methods in Modern Evangelism

be a God. I suppose each one must find out for himself, but it may be stimulating to inquire what the masters of the ages, the greatest thinkers of the past and present, have to say about God. Of course, Jesus believed in God with all His mind and soul, and the great thinkers of the ages, even those who preceded Him in time, have most of them, from the days of Plato and Socrates and Aristotle and Bacon to the age of Lord Kelvin and Sir Oliver Lodge, shared His feeling. "Here is the last great certainty," Phillips Brooks said to the men of Harvard, "Be sure of God, and in the end nothing can overthrow you." But as a matter of fact, all those who are leaders among our young people ought to show them as conclusively and impressively as possible that there is a pragmatic test which is available, so that in the field of life and not in the field of philosophy or psychology must lie the demonstration of spiritual things. Much of the skepticism which is expressed by young people ought not to be taken too seriously. An exaggerated value is being put upon the doubts which are voiced by the adolescent mind of to-day. In many cases they are flippant and unconsidered trifles. They are the preenings of intellectual wings on the part of one who is learning to fly. There is an intoxication in it which even deceives the tyro himself. It is the sharing of his treasure by one who has joined the newly rich intellectually. Bacon was right when he said:

"A little learning leadeth to infidelity, but deeper study bringeth us back to the truth."

Much of the doubt that finds expression is the doubt of a life that is seeking to justify oneself in a course which has already been decided upon. Why should a man know the truth when he is not willing to follow it? The Saviour laid down the pragmatic test to which I have referred. If any man will do His will, he shall know of the doctrine. Deed must precede creed, or it amounts to nothing. Christianity is not, after all, a thing to be argued out; it is a thing to be lived out. It is a life, and so a matter not of speculation but of experience. An experience in early life will do more for a man than any amount of ratiocination. A great master of modern thought has said, "A vital Christian experience early in life is a marvellous adjuster of problems which may assail in later life. No mere apologetic, however profound and lucid, can answer the mental problems of maturity so powerfully and definitely as an early Christian experience."

After long and intimate acquaintance with students in school and college, I find the fault in the matter of skepticism among them is not so much with specific problems as with the temper of the mind and heart. The students hear so much about the material, about science and all that, that they seem to feel religion must give an account of itself by the same laws and in the same ways. To this

the answer is, material law for material life, intellectual laws for intellectual life, but spiritual laws and spiritual experience for spiritual things. It was for this reason that Jesus said, "These things are spiritually discerned." "What the mind needs is a changed atmosphere. A renewed sense of God and duty will do more than any intellectual Renaissance," says an English writer. The challenge to the Church is to bring the light of eternity into the life of the world. To be assured of that, we have only to recall the plain record of history. How intellectual differences fade away when a spiritual atmosphere touches a man or a community! These are experiences deeper than argument. There are at least as many great scientists who are Christians as there are great scientists who are not. There are Christian philosophers who are quite as astute and whose influence is quite as far-reaching as that of any who are agnostic. So it is quite evident that it is not the facts of science or philosophy but something quite extraneous to these which separates men into Christian believers and doubters.

We speak of Christ as the great Teacher; and He was that, but He was infinitely more. Critics are saying of Him that much that He taught was borrowed, that the Golden Rule was taught long before His time and that the principles of the Sermon on the Mount were enunciated in other lands and in other centuries long before; but no man has ever

dared to say that anybody in any time surpassed Him in what He was. He may not have been the first man to teach the Golden Rule, but He was the first to live it.

So it is well for our boys and girls to see pretty plainly that religion is not a thing to be argued out. They are to make the great experiment, then they will find out whether these things are so. As I visit our colleges and universities, I find many who are eager to discuss, as a pure matter of argument, evolution, inspiration, and many other mooted questions, but when I have probed into their lives I have found them in most cases young people who are not yet ready to do the thing which they know to be right and who try to justify themselves in their failure by seeking to find some intellectual ground for their neglect.

What our young people need is not a more scientific but a more practical presentation of Christianity. When missionaries have told me that the trouble in China and Japan is an intellectual one; that one set of men are saying the missionaries are preaching an antiquated gospel and another are saying the preaching is not orthodox; then I am replying, that the great trouble is that Christians are not proving the value of their religion by their lives. What good will orthodoxy in creed do as against a life that is heterodox? Of what value will our lectures in the classroom be if our teachers and our preachers are showing that they are

only living a ten per cent. life on a hundred per cent. profession? Our young people are quick to notice all this.

Somebody has said our churches are made up of people who would be equally shocked to see Christianity doubted or put into practice. Mahatma Gandhi, perhaps the greatest soul in India to-day, has said, "I would suggest first that all of you Christians, missionaries and all, must begin to live more like Christ. If you will come to us in the spirit of your Master, we cannot resist you. I would suggest that you must put your emphasis upon love, for love is the center and soul of Christianity." He did not mean love as a sentiment but love as a working force, the one real power in a moral universe.

Dr. Jones in his *The Christ of the Indian Road* says, "A former, fiery opponent of Christianity said, 'I never understood the meaning of Christianity until I saw it in Gandhi.'" It will never do for Christians to have it said that the principles of Jesus are better exemplified by those they call heathen than by themselves.

We need have no fear as to the attitude of the student mind, if we can only be assured that the life of their leaders rings true. There is no way to move the students of America to God so rapidly and so mightily as to have that movement come from those of their own number who have seen the light and are walking in it. I have seen the

captain of a football team bring his whole team with him to Christ, because of what they saw in him. It is worth while for every student to reflect that when the captain of the Army football team called his men about him for the last call, which led them to victory, it was not a call to realignment of men but a call to prayer; while the opposing eleven consulted as to its methods, he prayed not for victory but that his men might play the game, stand true, nor sell their manhood for victory on the field. They might well say, with Addison:

“’Tis not in mortals to command success  
But we’ll do more, Sempronius—  
We’ll deserve it.”

## XVI

### HOME EVANGELISM

**M**ILLENNIUMS ago Socrates said, "Strange that we spend so much time in getting money and so little on those to whom we are to leave it." And only yesterday King Khama said, "You English take great care of your goods, but you throw away your children."

All thoughtful students of life, all fathers and mothers who have faced the facts, unite with the modern psychologist in affirming that we have delayed the proper training of our children too long; we have laid the stress on the adolescent years which ought to have been given to the years of infancy and childhood. I presume we are all agreed that the solution to the great problems of character is to be found in the home. The story of the great lives which have moved the world is largely the story of formative influence, beginning at a mother's knee, or in the sweet uplifting atmosphere of a Christian home.

To lay one's hand against the logs of the little cabin at Hodgenville where Abraham Lincoln was born, and to think of what happened there for the blessing of America and the help of the world in eight short years, is to get a new conception of



imponderable forces which have their rise in the early springtime of life, but which are mighty to make or to mar the growth of a soul.

How far have the changed conditions of modern life interfered with such training in our time? Is the atmosphere of the home less spiritual than it used to be? Is the sense of responsibility as apparent in the lives of our fathers and mothers? Have the changed conditions of society overthrown the religious life of the home so that family worship has largely disappeared and our children go out into the daily temptations of life with no sweet restraining thought born of fellowship with God to help them? If for any reason there is less opportunity now than formerly for the act of worship, such as Burns has forever glorified in his *Cotter's Saturday Night*, is it not true that there should be a constant "public opinion" in the home which has set its standard of moral and spiritual values by which the conscience of a child, which is so largely a matter of education, is being directed? Will not the child form his idea of what religion ought to be by what he sees in his own home? Ingersoll has told us that it was the first eight years of his life that really made him an infidel. Why should a boy be moved to pray with reverence, "Our Father, who art in heaven," when the only father he knows on earth is harsh, and willful and narrow and unloving?

In another book, *Pastor and Evangelist*, I have

## 108 Motives and Methods in Modern Evangelism

spoken of family worship and its power in the home life, under the title "The House of Obed-Edom." May I commend that chapter to any who desire to consider the possibilities and the value of worship in the home?

An article recently appeared in one of our church papers entitled "Breaking Down the Family Altar." It said that a company of preachers were lamenting that the family altar had fallen down and that there was no more such general devotion as they knew in their youth to this helpful institution. Whereupon a college professor interrupted to say that he was rather glad it had fallen down. It was better for the old to give place to the new, for some more modern method to do the work that was once done by that "rather antiquated" institution. So far as appeared, however, the professor had nothing to propose that would be adequate to take its place.

Perhaps I may be allowed to say, as a result of an experience covering the whole country, that there is at present a deep consciousness throughout the entire land that something must be done to restore that spirit of worship and daily meditation for which the family altar stood.

We have sent out this year a half million copies of *The Fellowship of Prayer*, in which there is a passage of Scripture, a hymn, a meditation and a prayer suitable for family devotion for each day during the pre-Easter period. In addition, we

have sent out tens of thousands of copies of suggested passages and meditations for the Week of Prayer and for Holy Week. We have received urgent requests from many sources to extend these Scripture readings and meditation to cover the entire year. We are already naming special books in the New Testament for different months, and these are being ordered by hundreds of thousands from the American Bible Society. The radio has been broadcasting from New York and from Chicago every morning an appropriate meditation and prayer, so that those who for any cause are not permitted to have family worship may each here find strength and comfort to his own soul by these messages from unseen messengers.

We believe the spirit of worship is so deeply ingrained in human life that it cannot, and will not, die out. The soul longs for fellowship with God, and that passage is taking on new meaning to many hearts, "They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run and not weary; they shall walk and not faint." The cry of psychology is echoing the exhortation of the Psalmist, "Wait, I say, upon the Lord! "

I would like to remind every member of the family that, after all, his greatest field of religious opportunity is to be found in the home. It may be true that the hardest field to work is the one within one's own door, and yet that is the field for

which we are most truly responsible. Why should a father not have the joy of bringing his own son to Christ? Who can better lead that son than his own father? Who can have so much influence with him as his own mother? Is there anything more beautiful than to see a father the chosen pal of his son, or the mother the chosen chum of her daughter? It is doubtless true that "the groves were God's first temples," but it is also supremely true that God's first altar is found by most of us at a mother's knee.

Of all things that parents should present as the most fitting for the frankest talk and understanding before their children is the matter of the life which the Bible says is the real life, and of which Jesus said, "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." Why not talk about that life as you would talk about any other supreme concern? Why have any silences or strained relations about it? To face it now will save so much anxiety in later life. Why cannot everybody in the family look at this matter as a concern of real interest as well as of supreme importance? How much family prayers would help in making religion loved and real! Is it not far better to set up an altar at the top of the precipice than to dig a grave for a lost soul at the bottom of it and to fall yourself into the grave of the broken hearted?

One of our leading college professors, who has

four children in school and college, reads the Bible with them every morning, and they talk about the Christian life as frankly as they talk about baseball. All gave themselves early to Christ. Why should the children stray away from Christ and the Church? Why should it not be the happy privilege of the parents to see the children accept their Saviour, and love Him as their Leader and Friend, as soon as they are able to make any intelligent choice in life?

Sometimes parents do not dare to talk to their children because their own life is so selfish, so sinful, so narrow and trivial. How can they ask their children to do what they are not willing to do themselves? Alas, many a minister's children have gone to the bad largely because of what they saw at home; and some ministers have been so much interested in the children of the others that they have forgotten to give proper attention to their own. Keep the home fountain pure. Talk with perfect frankness about the things of God. Season your conversation with salt. You do not need to cram a whole mouthful of it down the children's throats at any meal. It is an atmosphere you need to create, rather than to set up rules and regulations. Let Sunday be the happiest day of the week. Let worship be a beautiful and joyous thing. Remember that eternal destinies are now being made.

You are very careful about what your child

should eat, and that is proper; to what school he shall go, and that is wise; what shall be his life-work, and that is important in the highest degree; but nothing can be so important as the question which concerns his eternal life. All other questions sink into insignificance before that; and yet how many parents talk more about any one of the things I have named than they do about the only part of life which is to last forever.

Could anything be more impressive in the life of the child, and remembered longer, than the fact that the family altar was set up in the home; that every day began with the contemplation of the eternal and a prayer that that day they might be overshadowed of His grace? "Give us this day our daily bread" is often upon our lips. Is it not quite as important for us to pray, "Give us this day our daily thought," a thought of that love which will forefend us from temptation and lead us on to victory through the day and all the days that are to follow!

## XVII

### SUNDAY-SCHOOL EVANGELISM

**I**N my book, *Pastoral and Personal Evangelism*, I have considered the evangelistic situation with our young people in succeeding chapters: Evangelism in the Sunday-School; Ways of Reaching the Young; The Preparation for Decision Day; Decision Day; After Decision Day; Development of Christian Experience. The themes which the chapters suggest are there treated at some length, and I will not duplicate them here. I wish, however, to reiterate the great conviction which is on my heart—and I am sure it is shared by every thoughtful Christian pastor and teacher—that we must give our attention to a far greater extent than we have done to conservation, so that reclamation will not be so necessary and, alas, so discouraging.

Dr. Hannan has called attention to the fact that the young people of the Sunday-school supply four-fifths of the Church's gain, while reclamation supplies less than one-fifth. The same author says: "An eminent judge in Brooklyn said to a court room full of people that in five years 2,700 young criminals had been before him for sentence. Of that 2,700 not two per cent. had ever been in a Sunday-school or a church—Catholic, Protestant

## 114 Motives and Methods in Modern Evangelism

or Jewish—and not one of them was attending any Sunday-school during the period in which the offense was committed.”

When one considers the potentiality of the Sunday-school, one cannot help feeling that there is no other place where the investment in Christian character will pay such large dividends. But we must have a pretty clear conception of what the teaching and training function of the Sunday-school is. We are giving much thought to Christian education. In our Sunday-school we are seeking to train our children in the critical knowledge of the history and value of God's word; of the development of the Christian Church, and its relations to the social problems of the day. But every teacher will need to realize that, after all, the result of that training is not measured chiefly by historical or literary results. One may know the sixty-six Books of the Bible by name, and be able to give a fairly good digest of the history and teaching of each Book, without having gained anything out of that study in the development of character. The teacher may be a past-master in the wisdom of the schools, apt to teach, and of large knowledge, but she will not be fitted for her place and task unless she has that something which is far better than knowledge, and of which the good Book says, “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.”

It is not her teaching but herself that every



faithful teacher should realize is to produce the crowning effect of her task. There is great need in all our Sunday-school teaching that the truth we teach should become felt truth—truth which translates itself into life. With this great fundamental thought at the basis of all our training, let us look at some of the facts and present-day needs which are revealed to us by a careful study of the Sunday-school as an institution.

No more accurate and exhaustive study of this problem has been presented than that which Dr. Walter S. Athearn has given in *The Indiana Survey of Religious Education*. This book ought to be carefully studied by all officers and teachers. Here are some of the deductions which this Survey presents to us:

Out of 14,920 Indiana Sunday-school pupils only one-half are members of the church. In the rural Sunday-school sixty-one per cent. of the boys and fifty-two per cent. of the girls are not members of any church. In the urban schools forty-seven per cent. of the boys and forty-two per cent. of the girls are not members of the church.

There are more children in the Sunday-school at the age of eleven than at any other time; seventy-five per cent. of them, however, have left the church before they are eighteen. The same thing is true with regard to the passing out of scholars from the day-school. Out of four scholars in the day-school at eleven, three and one-half

have passed out of school before they are eighteen. There is, however, reason for this, as many of them must go to work; but there is no reason why any should ever leave the Sunday-school. That they do leave the school is largely because there has been no adequate appeal to them in the earliest years of their connection with the Sunday-school that would ally them definitely with the Christian Church by an experience all their own.

There has been a marked improvement in the matter of the age at which our young people seek Christ. In the Methodist Episcopal Church the figures show that the medial age of church membership is eleven years and nine months. Forty years ago it was sixteen years and four months, so that nearly five years of Christian life has thus been added to our young people. In the Congregational Church the medial age is put down at fifteen years, nine months; Presbyterian Church, at fourteen years, eight months; Baptist Church, fourteen years, one month.

Dr. Athearn, speaking of the deflection of the children from the Sunday-school, wisely says, "You can never solve the problem of the dip by beginning at the dip." The training should begin at the cradle, and however long a person may live, measured by the forces which make for character and development which is to bear fruit in future life, the longest part of any one's life is the first seven years. It has passed to be a proverb in the

Roman Catholic Church, "Give me a child until he is seven, and I care little who has him after that." The thought is that in those years the great principles which affect character will have so thoroughly developed in the child that he can never quite be turned aside from his first faith.

In the matter of the Sunday-school teachers, out of 2,303 ninety-eight per cent. were church members, and of that number 86.6 per cent. gave the home as the cause of their joining church; next came the revival; and after that the Sunday-school. It is startling to find that forty-six out of every one hundred Methodist Episcopal Churches have no young people's organizations, but only a Sunday-school. Therefore, the importance of faithful work in the Sunday-school can hardly be overestimated. One-third of the Sunday-school teachers in Indiana are men, and two-thirds are women.

Our teachers must keep themselves young in spirit, and so do all that they can to be in vital touch with all that the children are doing. We ought to have more teachers of high school and college age, and we can have them if we will only train the children in their early adolescence. At present the average age of our Sunday-school superintendents is shown to be forty-one; of male teachers, forty-six; of female teachers, thirty-seven.

The figures given show that, in the matter of coming into the church, ten per cent. came in be-

fore they were ten years of age and forty-three per cent. from ten to fifteen, so that over one-half of those who come into the church—exactly fifty-three per cent.—came before they were fifteen. It is deeply significant to notice that there were more persons who came into the church between the ages of five and ten than between the ages of thirty-five and seventy-five.

Dr. Athearn is very careful to say that the Sunday-school must produce an atmosphere of evangelism, and he affirms, "Religious education is an instrument by which evangelism is to be set forward. Religion is not a doctrine but an experience." There are four classes of persons, at least, that ought to be profoundly interested in every Sunday-school scholar—the pastor, the Sunday-school superintendent, the teacher, the parents. There ought to be conference between them; each ought to seek to supplement the work of the other. After all, there is nothing that counts like personal interest. If a scholar feels that there is nothing on the heart of the teacher of such absorbing concern as that the scholar shall yield his heart to Christ, the realization will have tremendous influence in the decisions of that life. To keep in close touch with father and mother, with Sunday-school superintendent and pastor, will give the teacher great power in using influences which will be decisive under the blessing of God in turning the heart she loves to Jesus Christ.

Let our teachers come to understand that the measure of their success as Sunday-school workers is not chiefly in the answering of questions of fact concerning Bible history and literature. But the supreme question which every teacher ought to ask himself or herself is, "Have I, by the grace of God, done the thing which I was commissioned to do? Have I led my scholars to the personal choice of Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord, and can I honestly say at the great assize, surrounded by those who have come under my influence, 'Here am I and those whom Thou hast given me!'"

## XVIII

### VISITATION EVANGELISM

**A**ND he brought him to Jesus." This is the climax of the story of the winning of the man who later preached the greatest sermon which ever was preached and which had as its dénouement the winning of the largest number at one time ever recorded in the history of the Christian Church. It was his brother, Simon Peter, whom Andrew brought. What a great day's work that was in the history of the Christian Church! What a loss to the Church throughout all ages, if Simon Peter—in some respects the greatest of the twelve apostles—had not been won to Jesus Christ. It was his brother's testimony which struck him under conviction; the presence of Jesus did the rest.

It was this personal touch which brought Philip and Nathaniel, and so opened that wonderful list of the mighty men of God which is embalmed forever in the first chapter of the Gospel of St. John.

There is a growing conviction that the spirit and method which was apparent in the founding of the Church is the spirit and method which must be used for the greatest possible enlargement of the Kingdom and for the deepening of its power in the lives of men. The record of the winning of men

in all the ages of the Church has been largely the record of the personal touch. Even great mass movements have been nothing more or less than the consummate triumph of individual effort.

In the early Church the disciples were sent out two and two, to their own unspeakable advantage and to the great upbuilding of the early Church. Of late a system embodying much of the practice of the early Church, and put into form by our modern methods of organization, has been accomplishing in many places results which are quite phenomenal; so much so that "Visitation Evangelism" has come to be considered something that may become intensely vital in the life of every parish church. The form is very simple: A dozen, a score, a hundred consecrated men and women, who themselves have had an experience and are therefore entitled to speak, who have caught something of the Master's passion and therefore feel a solemn urge which they cannot deny—these people are assembled by a consecrated pastor, that they may unite in intensive work for a given period. Their purpose is to reach those who, largely through the indifference of Christian people, have never yielded themselves to Christ and who might too truthfully say: "No man hath cared for my soul."

The pastor gathers these people together. He has already, as the result of painstaking care on his own part and on that of his membership, a list

of people in the community who are not Christians and whom he may legitimately consider to be in his own field of religious responsibility. With such training as the needs of each may require, and after earnest, faithful prayer together—and, let us hope, with the resulting Presence which made the Day of Pentecost memorable forever—these men and women go out, in some cases two by two, to visit those who are without Christ and to win them to the personal choice of the blessed Saviour.

Among those who have used this method with large success is Rev. Guy H. Black, a pioneer in this field. He organized the work in a dozen cities, training the workers, showing them how to go about the work, what methods to use and in what spirit to conduct the work. The results in those cities were far beyond the expectations of himself and of those who were associated with him. While he claims no right as a discoverer of this method, he has used it with such signal success as to challenge many others to undertake a similar work. Rev. A. Earl Kernahan, also, has been very successful in the training of workers and in uniting the churches in a given community to carry this method to actual success. Far greater results in ingathering have been accomplished through this method, by the men whom we have named and by many others who have adopted the same general plan, than has been accomplished through great tabernacle meetings or



by vocational evangelists of proved ability and devotion. If "new occasions bring new duties," it happens that new conditions bring new opportunities; and new methods succeed where old methods have failed.

The general complaint has been that very few of the unconverted attend present-day evangelistic meetings, even those conducted by the great evangelists. The novelty of the experience of going to a theatre or tabernacle in place of a church has lost its compelling power. The changed evaluation of human experiences and needs has brought a different emphasis, and so in many ways the old order has given place to the new. If people will not come to hear the evangel from the lips of a stranger, there is still no reason why the same evangel from the lips of one who loves them—a brother, or sister, or comrade or friend—may not have compelling power. It is love which opens every avenue of the soul; it is love and not argument which has convincing power; and when everything else has lost its force love never fails. So it has happened that the hearts of hardened men and women have melted before the tender solicitude of a yearning love. So it has happened, also, that a simple testimony has been mightier than learned argument or a demonstrated syllogism. Such yearning solicitude has captivated the student mind as well as the practical thought of business men; it has charmed our youth out of the

## 124 Motives and Methods in Modern Evangelism

path of dalliance; and a pure, holy love has snatched our youth from the power of passion. A means so effective in reaching men and women, boys and girls, is certainly one that ought to be carefully investigated, and every pastor ought to utilize it to the extent of his ability. If he does not know how to train workers, let him ask help from some director who is familiar with this work, learn the most approved methods and apply them to his own task.

If the results of this work have been large numerically in increasing the roll of the church, the result has been quite as great spiritually also, in the lives of those who have undertaken this gracious task. No man can honestly seek to win another to Christ until he is conscious that his own heart is honest before God. He will ask that a live coal from off the altar of God's flaming grace may touch his own lips, that they may be pure to speak the message which other hearts need so much to hear. There will be deep heart-searching, and there will be holy living. How can I ask others to do what I am not doing myself? How can I bespeak the devotion of others to a Christ whom I myself do not follow? Anybody who is at all honest must cease his dalliance with sin or give up the work carried forward in hypocrisy.

Nothing would more noticeably quicken the life of a church than to have a considerable portion of its membership give themselves to evangelistic

visitation. It is quite obvious, from what has already been said, that the result of this visitation must depend very largely upon the character and devotion of those who do the visiting. If they are going to ask a friend to join the church only on the same basis and for the same reasons as those impelling him when about to join a club or a secret society, his effort is an impertinence; it is a prostitution of sacred things. It may have form, but it has not the power. We have already more than enough members who have a name to live and are dead. We do not need any more men and women simply to send in their names. First of all, they must surrender themselves to Him who is the Founder and Builder of the Church of the Living God. It is in Him that they are to live and move and have their being. It is through an experience of the vital things of God that they receive the title to be called after His name and to be sharers with Him of the suffering and the glory which belong to the Church He has chosen. The ringing question, in the answer of which must lie the verdict of our service, is: Do you belong to the Church? Not the church in its narrow sense, not the church simply as an ecclesiastical body, but the Church whose names are written down in that Book, the pages of which never grow yellow with age and whose names are never dim—the Church of the Living God, of whose faith Jesus Christ is the Author and Finisher.

## XIX

### NORMAL EVANGELISM

**M**UCH of my work, as Secretary of Evangelism for the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America, has been among the theological schools of the different denominations. Both the faculty and students of such schools have expressed their regret to me that the students were forced to go out into the active work of the ministry having had little if any experience in evangelistic methods. I have found the same regret among those in actual pastorates who felt the need of some sort of special evangelistic work but who found little or nothing in their seminary experience to equip them for the task. That our theological schools are now giving greater attention to evangelism is a matter which promises great good for the future. It has been my happy experience to speak to scores of theological schools concerning this matter and to bring out of my own experience such suggestions as I hoped might be of service to the students when they came to face the tremendous spiritual responsibilities of the pastorate.

Annually for many years I have given a course of lectures before the Theological School of Bos-

ton University. I claim this in some sense as my alma mater, and I have been exceedingly interested in all its work. A phase of evangelistic work has recently developed there that I think would be of great use in the theological schools throughout the country. Professor Adolph Linfield, who has the evangelistic work of the seminary in charge, came to his task from extended experiences in the pastorate and as district superintendent in one of the New England Conferences. He has undertaken a kind of clinic in evangelism which has been of great influence in helping the students to make a venture for themselves in this great field.

Professor Linfield has actually been to the different fields where the students were doing their work as pastors and has shown them, out of his extended experience, how to set up an evangelistic program. The plan which he has proposed and worked out among them is somewhat as follows:

First, the pastor selects a group of people who will be interested in personal evangelism. It goes without saying that this group should represent the more earnest and spiritual people in the parish and be composed of members who will be willing to set apart a certain amount of time each week for definite Christian work. Without any public announcement, they are invited to meet the pastor; he seeks to impart to them something of the passion of Jesus and to challenge them to carry out in an aggressive way the great command of Christ,

“Go ye into all the world and make disciples.” He tries to show them that any church which is to be a true church of Jesus Christ must be evangelistic. That is the heart of the Gospel. With a nucleus like this almost anything would be possible, but without the support of such a group little or nothing will be done by the church.

In addition to the committee of workers, the pastor makes out a list of prospects. This list is usually three to five times the number of the workers, and as a matter of fact it ought to be increased until it is as large as the membership of the church. All these have come more or less under the influence of the church and very likely are bound by ties of relationship or fellowship to those who make up the body of the church; and they are the ones who might reasonably be expected to be won to Christ during that special season.

In some cases larger numbers are given to one person than another, while in other cases an equal number of names is assigned to each worker. But, contrary to the usual order in visitation evangelism, the workers do not go directly to these prospects; they go instead to the neighbours and friends of the prospects; for around every one of these unconverted people there is presumably a group of Christian friends who ought to be interested in, and to work for, their salvation. The aim is to organize a secret circle around each one of the prospects. If Christian people are not do-

ing anything for the salvation of their unconverted friends, they ought in some such way as this to be aroused to their duty. Each of these Christian friends so enlisted agrees to pray daily for, and to lay siege to, the prospect until he is won.

With only a comparatively small number of selected cases, it is evident that in the ordinary church there would be two or three hundred people praying daily for their friends and neighbours. This means that a gracious revival is already begun. What would hearten a pastor more than to know that the larger proportion of his members were daily uniting their prayers before the throne of grace in the interest of the unconverted of the community? With so many people praying and working, there cannot fail to be immediate and lasting results. "As a matter of fact," Dr. Linfield says, "we have observed that somewhere along the third week some of the people prayed for begin to show a new interest in one way or another in religious things." It is at this stage that the prospect should be visited. The committee, going over the list with the pastor, should decide who among the workers should call upon the person and challenge him to dedicate his life to Christ. Frequently it will be thought best to have the pastor himself make the call, or some person whom the prospect is known greatly to respect. The list of individuals should be checked up until every person has been visited by some one, and

## 130 Motives and Methods in Modern Evangelism

this visitation should be continued until every last one on the list has either accepted Christ or finally refused to consider the matter.

When this sort of a campaign comes to a climax, at Easter or some other favourable time, it might well be in a brief series of special meetings, where there would be a chance for those who have been won to make public profession of their changed life and purpose before they are brought into full membership in the church. At this time others who were unknown to the workers might be reached.

It is highly important that the list of workers, and any remaining prospects which may not have made the great decision, should be kept intact and made the nucleus for a steady work of grace extending over weeks and months.

Dr. Linfield reports that returns from one hundred student pastors showed 1,300 decisions for Christ and 1,500 new members added to their churches. In addition to the work of the student pastors about forty other students, organized into gospel teams, reported 307 decisions for Christ in their meetings.

I have called this chapter "Normal Evangelism." If some such plan as this could be presented in all our theological schools, would it not be immensely helpful in developing a generation of preachers who would have had actual experience in bringing men to Christ before they had to face



the grave responsibilities of a pastorate, and thus become responsible in a very important measure for the spiritual life of hundreds of people? I am happy to feel, after intimate association with our theological schools, that they are recognizing the need of this kind of work and are undertaking it with increasing success. After all, the Church must be built up in the same way and by the same methods as were attendant upon its founding.

It is the personal touch of a yearning soul which in some way or other must be felt before the average man or woman will be inclined to make answer to the great call of the Master, "Son, daughter, give me thy heart." Experience gives confidence. Faith is generated by doing business with God, and nothing will cut the nerve of materialism and infidelity like the actual witnessing of a new birth. To see bad men becoming good, to see morally blind men and deaf men and lepers actually cleansed will bring assurances concerning the supernatural which can never be accomplished by academic studies. Christianity is not a theory, it is not a dogma, it is not a creed; it is a new birth and a new life. It is not so much reformation as regeneration, and the normal evangelism for the day is that which seeks to show to every one that the height of wisdom is to be at one with God and that the great answer for sin and for doubt which the world needs is to practice the presence and power of God.

## XX

### WEEK-END EVANGELISM

**S**OME of the denominational Commissions on Evangelism have an approved list of vocational evangelists, subject to the call and placement of the Secretary of Evangelism; others have a list of pastors who are willing to give a definite amount of time each year to help their brother pastors in evangelistic work. Arrangements of this sort are made by the leading denominations—Baptists, Methodists, Presbyterians and others—thus utilizing the forces at the command of the Church in such a way as to give ample field for every pastor and evangelist to do his best for the upbuilding of the Church of God.

In rural communities, under the direction of District Superintendents, or State or County Superintendents, notable results have been accomplished. Scores of old churches have been rejuvenated and scores of new churches have been set up in neglected and unchurched communities.

One method of making effective the general purpose which I have indicated is known as "Week-End Evangelism." Dr. H. F. Stilwell, General Superintendent of Evangelism of the Northern Baptist Convention, has been especially successful,

both in doing this work himself and in arranging plans covering entire communities and even cities. Associated with him have been Rev. C. H. Stull, Superintendent of Evangelism for Ohio, and other State Superintendents.

The general idea back of this "Week-End Evangelism" and the method of its working is somewhat as follows:

Where a pastor desires to undertake this specific form of work, he secures two or three or a half-dozen accredited evangelists and pastors, according to the size of his plan and parish. He has already taken a month or more to prepare his own people to do effective personal work. At each midweek meeting during that period the direction of the people has been turned to the Bible and to prayer, with the thought of developing thereby something of the Master's passion for the souls of men. The value of prayer is tested—not so much regarding the coming of some strange, mysterious influence upon the community, as marking a setting apart to consecrated service the life of the one who prays, and seeking a union with God until the soul is transformed, made sensitive to spiritual influence and possessed of such a clear perception of the yearning and passion of one's Lord as will make it impossible not to follow in His footsteps.

Groups should be formed, also, under proper leaders; teachers and officials in the Sunday-school, mothers and wives, young people in school, boys

## 134 Motives and Methods in Modern Evangelism

and girls in the community, all should make a special effort to reach those of their own kind. They know the needs; they have felt the temptations; they ought to be able to be of service.

A very careful list of prospects, covering the entire community, should be made, with every name on a card, bearing also such information as the visitor needs to have concerning that person, his family and business life, his relations to the church, and the like.

For the campaign week, a plan like the following is suggested:

On Tuesday evening a supper, in the church, at which the pastor, the outside helpers and the local workers are gathered. In some cases the pastor and his own chosen leaders will bring the best results for the visiting teams; in others, the visitors will do better work under an outside evangelist or pastor. At this conference the pastor lays before the workers the prospect list, and each worker takes the names either assigned by the pastor or chosen by himself. With special suggestions as to practical details of personal work, the groups now separate for visitation. This work is continued Wednesday afternoon in many cases, especially where work can be most successfully done among the ladies at home or with the young people after school. Wednesday evening the groups come together again for luncheon and conference. Who have succeeded, and why? Who

have failed, and how did it happen? Are there any changes that ought to be made? Could some one else take a given case with greater probability of success? A second visitation should be carried on for Wednesday evening.

Of course the purpose in all this work is to secure if possible a personal decision for Jesus Christ on the spot. If it is absolutely impossible to do this, the matter may at least be so presented that those visited will promise to be present at the public meeting also. If any prospects have not been won, here is the chance to bring them under the influence of the vital message from the pulpit on Thursday and Friday nights.

The widest publicity ought to be given to these meetings. Organizations can be invited, young people's societies or clubs. On Thursday and Friday afternoons, the visiting pastors and evangelists can go, under the pastor's direction, to talk with people whom for one reason or another the pastor and his associates have not succeeded in winning. The public meeting will furnish an excellent opportunity to get those who have privately assented to the call of Christ to make public profession of their purpose. The more thoroughly one is committed to his new choice and his new life the better.

In the matter of giving a public invitation of any sort, the ground ought to be thoroughly prepared, and it ought to be certain that some per-

sons are present who are ready to accept the invitation. Little is so dispiriting as to give an invitation of any kind and have no response.

In some churches Saturday night will be the best night of the week. The tide of religious thought and life will have been increasing, and that service will make the best possible preparation for the holy Sabbath. If, however, conditions are not right for a good attendance and increasing interest, it would be better not to hold a public meeting at all, but to spend that evening in a most thoroughgoing preparation for the Sabbath. The Lord's day must mark the climax of the effort. Every officer and teacher in the Sunday-school should see to it that the utmost possible results are accomplished there. No teacher can feel satisfied unless the last thing has been done to win the last member of the class to the personal choice of Jesus Christ. The results in the Sunday-school under a tender, kindly invitation ought to be most satisfactory after these days of yearning solicitude on the part of friends and neighbours.

In some cases, the morning service takes on a warm evangelistic tone, and the entire congregation is asked to register its decision for Christ and for His service. In other cases no formal appeal for decision is made, but a chance is offered for individuals at the close of the service to confer with the pastor and his helpers in a service of inquiry. In the afternoon, men's and women's Bible

classes and outside organizations meet; in some cases a meeting especially for the men or women of the community has been held with very gracious results.

At the evening service there should come the climax of the week's faithful work. We have seen hundreds of entire families won to Christ as the result of such a series of meetings. By visiting from house to house, in rural parishes, by going to every last farm, the most unlikely cases have been proven to be only waiting for some one to open the way; they have gladly come to Christ and to His Church.

The pastor's hand has been upon all the work; the personal touch has given a sense of responsibility, to every one who succeeded in the winning of a soul to Christ, to see to it that in later weeks and months the new believer is faithful to the new life. Such personal touch will make it possible to anchor every new member to some special responsibility in the church, and so to hold him steadfast for building in himself the new life and, having received that blessed life, for reaching others and winning them also.

## XXI

### OUTDOOR EVANGELISM

**I**N an earlier book, *Pastoral and Personal Evangelism*, I have a chapter on "Summer Evangelism" with reference especially to summer campaigns in gospel tents in cities and also in rural communities by preaching on the village commons, country parks, and grove meetings. I describe the village tent and speak of the use of the gospel wagon in places where it is not desirable to use a tent. In addition to the plans set forth in that chapter, I would like to call attention to the possibilities of summer work in our cities as well as in the country.

We now have city federations in fifty of our large cities, and in most of these careful plans have been worked out by efficient Secretaries of Federation, by which in public parks or on the street the Gospel may be presented under circumstances which make it possible to accomplish results which could not be reached in the churches. It is fair to say that some of the churches are themselves using throughout the year a system of outdoor appeal which has been notably successful. This is especially true of the work which has been done at the Marble Collegiate Church, Fifth Avenue and



Twenty-ninth Street, where Dr. Burrell and Dr. Poling are pastors. Dr. Poling has issued a book in which he describes most interestingly the results which have come from the noonday pulpit at the corner of the street. The results have been so satisfactory that the meetings have become a fixture.

There is also an outdoor pulpit in connection with Grace Protestant Episcopal Church on Broadway at Tenth Street. In many churches in the summer a preliminary service is held in front of the church when this is possible. With a cornet to assist, the grand old hymns of the Church are sung, and a brief warm-hearted address of ten minutes is given, either by the pastor or by some leader among the young people. In many cases the young people have been responsible for the service and have found, by circulating among the people who gather to listen, that by a kindly word many have been brought into fellowship with the church. This service is a brief one, and the audience is urged to pass into the church for the evening service.

In several cities where there are grounds about the church, the evening service is held throughout in the open air. In one of the leading cities in the South, the aldermen granted permission for the pastor of a large church to close the street running by the church during the hour of the evening service; in that way ample accommodation was given for all to be seated and enjoy the service.

## 140 Motives and Methods in Modern Evangelism

Federation Secretaries in many cities have felt that there was no reason why the parks and open spaces of the city should be preëmpted by people who had a grievance or others who had a zeal, but not according to knowledge. So it has happened that many of the leading pastors of these cities have done incalculable good by bringing to the people on the streets and in the parks an inspiring and spiritual message.

They are telling us that the overturn of Russia was accomplished not in Petrograd but in front of the Metropolitan tower at Madison Square, where for months the principles of the Soviet Government were set forth and converts made, some of whom afterward held the reins of authority in Soviet Russia. If a soap-box orator can change the political fortunes of a nation, why may we not hope to accomplish as great results in a nobler field?

Perhaps there is no city where the open air campaign in the summer has been carried forward more successfully than in Detroit. Dr. Pearson, Secretary of the Detroit Council of Churches, has put in execution a plan largely as follows:

Each year the Council of Churches employs an experienced evangelistic preacher and a song leader to have charge of central meetings during July and August. These men and meetings are the center around which the whole open air campaign for the summer centers. A central representative commit-

tee, including all agencies doing open-air work, is formed each year which serves as a sort of Directing Committee and holds a meeting weekly for conference and counsel. The meetings are so distributed over the city that practically every section has some kind of open-air work. Many local pastors are brought into the organization, some of them conducting services on their own grounds, others in near-by parks. By permission of the Mayor a noon meeting is held each day in one of the down-town parks. A section of the park is roped off where a thousand people or more can be gathered. Evening meetings can also be held in the same place. It is arranged with the Mayor that this section is to be roped off at night, so that no automobiles will disturb the congregation. An automobile with a chime of bells is put on the streets and passing through the down-town section indicates where the service or services are to be held. This automobile also has a small organ and furnishes a platform for the quartette and the speaker. The ablest ministers and laymen of the city are interested in this movement. This has so largely proved itself as a dignified and worthwhile plan that the leading churchmen of the city heartily approve it. It is estimated that last year more than 200,000 people were reached by the gospel message on the streets and in the parks, and more than two thousand made some expression of their interest in a Christian life, either making an

## 142 Motives and Methods in Modern Evangelism

open confession of Christ or seeking the prayers and personal help of the workers.

When the crowds are gathered, there are many Christian workers who drop a kindly word of inquiry and interest, and in this way many are converted and won to the Church.

These meetings also furnish a fine opportunity to distribute portions of the Scriptures or some helpful evangelistic message. The city has become so well satisfied with the work done that there is no difficulty whatever in securing ample funds to carry on this open-air program.

If people will not come to the churches, will not the churches carry their message to the people? In many cases their doing so would cut the nerve of anarchy; it would bring comfort to those who are sore perplexed and distressed; it would put heart into men who are hopeless and save many, as it has already saved some, from the insane asylum and the morgue. Can we do better than to seek in all ways to reach those for whom the Church has the only adequate message? In some such way as we have suggested the Church can reach and uplift those who need the message which Christ has given, so that men will have less chance to say, "No man hath cared for my soul."

## XXII

### RURAL EVANGELISM

**F**OR twenty-one years I was pastor in New York City; for an equal number of years I was, boy and youth, in a little country parish. My first church was a little country church, and there I learned by personal experience more things about a pastor's duties and opportunities than I learned in the schools.

Human nature is about the same thing in country and in town, and men are as quick to realize unselfish devotion in one place as in the other. The sense of personality and individual responsibility develops quite as quickly in the country as in the city. There is more of independence of thought and quite as much individuality on the farm as in the street. In town all you have to do for heat is to open the register, and if you wish to go anywhere you hail a passing car or taxi, but in the country if you want heat, you have to build a fire yourself. If there are any paths through the drifting snow, you have to dig them. If you wanted to go anywhere in the old days, you had to hitch up the old horse or go afoot. Such experiences develop confidence and capacity. Such an aloofness from the crowd serves to give one

more respect for his own judgment and to put one more upon his own resources. A glance at history shows that, in the main, character develops more quickly and more deeply in the country than in town. The men who mount to the high place of opportunity and power come largely from the country, and it will be a sad day for the city church when the rural church is neglected. As the rivers flow from springs which are nourished in quiet places, so the great streams of public achievement have their rise far from the madding crowd.

Professor Phelps, of Andover Theological School, used to say to his students, "If you are going to preach in a city church, wear your best suit; if you are going to a country church, preach your best sermon."

In my first parish I learned by close fellowship with some of God's noblemen that the honest toil which I put into pastoral work and the midnight hours that I gave to spiritual consecration or mental toil, would pay me back a hundred-fold in that present time and in the years which were to come. Some of the friends I made in the church of God in that first parish have stood by me until this hour, while others went years ago into that unseen holy toward which all men are hastening, and where I love to think the fellowships of the earth are to be perpetuated in a blessed and eternal environment.

Having spent nearly half of my life in rural

environment, I am glad to speak upon the problems which are there faced and to offer some suggestions which I hope may be of service.

First of all, no one need to think of a country parish as less desirable than a city one; the chances are that the reverse is true. Nor need one necessarily think that the rewards of a faithful pastor are less in the country than in the city. There is, of course, a magic in numbers. If one is doing good work for the few, he loves to feel that if he could multiply that few into hundreds or thousands, he might be having a more effective and far-reaching ministry. But it is after all not quantity that is the supreme standard of measure, and if one's effectiveness in the country shall give him entrance to a larger field numerically, he will, because of his conscientious toil in early years, have both the volume of material and the development of mind which will stand him in good stead in that larger field. If he thinks the field is hard, all the more reason to rejoice in the development which will thus come to him. No man grows rapidly along the line of least resistance.

"The chambers of the great are jails  
And head winds right for royal sails."

The harder the field, the greater the development.

If a minister shows that he thinks himself in any way, either intellectually or socially, above his parishioners, he is riding for a fall. Any field

where eternal destinies are at issue, where children are to be guided into the path of virtue, where yearning, questioning souls may be guided and assured, where broken hearts may be bound up and ruined souls may come into a new and glorious fellowship—a place where such things can be accomplished must lie full in the sight of heaven, where God and angels and men will take notice, and questions more important than any settled on earth's battle-fields will be answered.

The tendency in the country is rather toward independence and aloofness. They are telling us about the paganism of the country, and if one will study the etymology of that word he will see how it comes to have its significance in the world's thought. Surrounded by all the beauties of nature, their very familiarity may breed indifference; or, in other cases, men may rejoice in the garden but fail to revere the Gardener. So there are questions which are peculiarly the problems of the rural parish, and to which the country pastor ought to give himself with eager thought and deep devotion.

First of all, the country pastor ought to put himself in friendly relations with his parish. He needs to establish some nexus beyond the simple one of his position which will bind him to the hearts of his parishioners and win their confidence and respect. He ought to be familiar with their problems and their tasks. It was a delight to me in



my early ministry to be able to do as big a day's work on the farm as any of my parishioners, to know as much about fertilizers, about the succession of crops, about orchards, their spraying and their cultivation, as anybody in my parish. To be able to give the advice of an expert to somebody who had never looked deep enough into the reason of things to understand how to make the most of their farms, that gave me a point of contact which was of incalculable advantage in dealing not only with the adults but more especially with the young men and women of my parish.

It is a mistaken notion that pastoral work is a worn-out and useless thing. An honest and consecrated preacher will find out more about his sermons in the lives of his people than in the commentaries which he studies or the lectures which he got in seminary or college. He must know at first hand the maladies which he is supposed by the grace of God to cure. Nothing paid me so well as the long weary miles I walked on the sandy, dusty road, or the paths I made brushing the morning dew from the grasses and daisies, as I went far afield to carry some message of sympathy and hope to those who were forlorn.

While it is true there are times when perhaps it is not wise to burden an irresponsive family with a prayer which they are not in position to appreciate or to gather strength from, yet I can honestly say that while I have often regretted that I

had not at least asked permission to pray, I do not recall a single occasion when, having prayed, I wished I had not. It is in the voice of prayer, spoken perchance in the homely living-room over the wooden-bottom chair, that new light and challenge has come to the soul and arrested it in the midst of its stolidity and indifference and by the very light of unseen power has illuminated the whole life.

In my country parish I began a practice which was never broken in all the years of my ministry. I gave the month of January each year to revival meetings, visiting in the afternoon and preaching every night. I soon got a company of young people who would bring unconverted friends with them each night. I tried to roll upon their hearts the thought that the success of those meetings was dependent quite as much on them as on me. We were all of us workers together with God. I tried to have them feel the truth of the blessed declaration of the Bible that whosoever shall turn a sinner from the error of his ways "shall save a soul from death and hide a multitude of sins."

I do not say that this evangelistic work might not be carried forward without any meetings, but I always found some who were waiting for the coming of such meetings, for the time when it would be perfectly natural and the expected thing that one should express publicly his desire to accept Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord, and I think

I have found that to make that public confession has been of incalculable service in strengthening the purpose and conviction of the heart to be steadfast in the Christian life.

The intimate fellowships of a country parish give one a chance to enter into the longings and needs of individuals as one cannot do in any city life. Many of the farms are rather remote from the church and, while the automobile has broken down the isolation, there is an aloofness which still persists and can be broken down in no way but by the personal touch. If they will not come to you, you can go to them; and it is not in human nature to resist unselfish, uncalculating service, a tender solicitude for the well-being of a man and his dear ones which has in it no ulterior motive whatever.

There is, as I have said, an unconscious evangelism which pervades a good man's life. To interest one's self in the children of the family, to nourish their aspirations for education and development, to show them that character is, after all, the greatest thing in life, to play the game like a man no matter where you play it, to fight the good fight of faith no matter on what battle-field, to show that the best that is in us needs to be nourished by a power greater than our own—all this is to put men into vital touch with Him who is their sufficient Helper.

It is such things as these which cut the nerve of

## 150 Motives and Methods in Modern Evangelism

anarchy and atheism, and overcome the pagan spirit. It is the truth as it is in Jesus, applicable to all fields and to all hearts in country or in town, that will steady the soul face to face with all questions.

As to methods and plans, there are many which I gladly recommend. For a general outline the chapter, "The Program for America," will furnish a fine basis. Nearly all the denominations, through their Commissions on Evangelism, now issue helpful programs of evangelistic work. It is a great thing to have a definite plan. Many hurry-up letters come to my office the middle of September or later the substance of which is, "Just home from vacation. Send me some plans and literature." All that should have been undertaken months before. It should have been presented to the congregation before vacation. The pastor needs to meditate and ruminate as he holds communion with God in restful days, to adapt to his own needs the plans which others have found helpful, and above all to wait for the illumination and inspiration of the Holy Spirit. All that does not come on the gallop. If one must take time to be holy, one must also take time to mature his plans under divine guidance. It is wonderful to see what new things open to the thought when plans and purposes are put to soak in the juices of the mind.

You have your finance committee and your com-

mittee on missions. The most important committee you can name is a Committee on Evangelism. They are to be your cabinet, the generals of your campaign. You make a personal canvass of your parish for current expenses and benevolences. Let it never be said that you put more emphasis on getting money for your salary than you do upon the saving of the souls of men. The personal visitation of all your parish with the yearning for souls as the motive will pay you bigger dividends than any other form of activity. Dr. Wagner, in his *Rural Evangelism*, says that in his own case, where for five years a gain of four and one-half per cent. was made without a special program, the first year with a definite program saw an increase to twenty per cent. Make a division of the membership among your trusted helpers and hold them responsible for their task. Visitation evangelism, week-end evangelism and other methods will help; but, after all, the best method is a method-ist—one whose heart the Lord hath touched. A very ordinary method worked by a heart aflame is far better than the best method worked by a sodden soul.

## XXIII

### A PROGRAM FOR AMERICA

**A** VERY remarkable letter has recently been received by the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America. It is from Mr. Edward A. Filene, one of the representative Jews of America. He says:

“I consider the growth of the church coöperative movement of all our religious forces a matter of vital significance in American life; and it will, I believe, contribute in an increasing degree to the moral influence of the Church.

“Perhaps you will not agree with me, but I have a growing conviction that to further this movement there is need for a nation-wide religious revival, if the Church is to regain in this generation a position of effective leadership in the public mind. In theory, I have always been opposed to, or at least have doubted, the efficacy of religious revivals. But when I think of the enormous forces of hate and destruction let loose by the war, it seems to me that nothing short of a great religious revival will have the power to check those forces and substitute for them the greater forces of brotherhood and tolerance.”

To have such an utterance from a man of Jewish training and antecedents is certainly a matter of more than passing interest. If our Jewish friends

feel this way, there is certainly a challenge resting upon the Christian Church which must be met.

The Commission on Evangelism of the Federal Council, in which the Secretaries of Evangelism of all denominations meet and which is a clearing house for the evangelistic movements of the country, has long felt the necessity of concerted action by the evangelistic forces of the country. Our Commission called a meeting of these evangelistic forces at Northfield, Mass., June 16th-18th, 1925, for conference of denominational and interdenominational evangelistic bodies. To that meeting came the Secretaries of Evangelism and other representatives of the constituent bodies of the Federal Council. There were also gathered there the Church Federation Secretaries of the leading cities in the country to the number of some fifty. As the reports of these Secretaries and other official representatives of the churches were presented, it became evident that there was much in common in the evangelistic methods followed by the several denominations. The Commission appointed a Committee on Program, of which Dr. George G. Mahy was Chairman, with instructions to prepare and present an outline of a plan for evangelistic work which would be in accord with the present evangelistic spirit and program of the constituent bodies of the Federal Council.

The report of the Committee, which was made up of Secretaries of Evangelism and Federation

Secretaries, was unanimously adopted by the Commission at Northfield and confirmed by the Commission at its meeting in New York a little later. Copies of that report were mailed to the ninety-three members of the Commission, and favourable replies were received from the denominational executives of Evangelism whose churches are affiliated with the Commission and from the Federation Secretaries throughout the country.

This plan, which was prepared with great care and practically unanimously adopted by the religious forces which have evangelism as their supreme object, was in outline as follows:

There was first a general statement of principles:

1. Evangelism is the foremost work of the Church. All her other activities are of value chiefly to the extent that they aid in making Christians truly Christlike; in bringing non-Christians to faith in Christ; to a sincere confession of Him as Saviour and Lord; and to devoted service in His name.

2. There is developing in the communions comprising the Federal Council a new spirit of unity and a growing uniformity of method in connection with their evangelistic work.

3. For these and other reasons, presented by the denominational representatives, we believe that the time has come for the adoption of a common program by the evangelistic agencies of the denominations. The Commission also expresses a



strong desire and expectation that all our churches will unite in carrying out this program and that they will adhere to its cardinal purposes, adapting it where necessary to their several needs.

## I. A GENERAL DENOMINATIONAL PLAN

1. The establishment or reinforcement of a Commission or Department of Evangelism by each one of the constituent Churches, with provision for such support as will make each denominational plan effective.

2. An effort on the part of each denomination to bring all pastors, officers and people to think and pray and work in terms of the whole Church of Christ.

3. The issuance by each Commission of a handbook on Pastoral Evangelism or other literature which will completely outline a parish evangelistic program.

4. A concerted effort on the part of the Commission or Department of Evangelism and all workers who can be enlisted for service, to present the plan of each denomination to the entire pastorate; to the official bodies; and to the members of all the churches.

5. A fellowship of prayer within the Denomination and with other Communions.

## II. PREPARING FOR THE WORK IN THE LOCAL CHURCH

1. There will be personal preparation on the part of the pastor himself.

## 156 Motives and Methods in Modern Evangelism

2. The pastor will draw up a definite evangelistic plan which will fit into the general program of the Church and be a vital part of all the work of the year.

3. This plan will be presented to the officers and people with an effort to secure their hearty approval, and to enlist them in the work of carrying it forward to success.

### III. A PASTORAL AND PARISH PLAN

1. A study of the church in order to form a basis upon which to select members for assignment to service.

2. The preparation of a complete constituency or prospective membership list.

3. The conduct of a Church Rally Day in addition to the usual Sunday-School Rally, preferably on the second Sunday of October, this to be followed by a careful consideration of the possibility of an autumn ingathering.

4. Sermons on evangelism to be given at stated seasons in order to inform the people as to the real meaning of evangelistic work and to quicken their spiritual life.

5. The assignment of names from the constituency list to personal workers, with provision for regular reports by them on the work done.

6. Training church members in their privileges and responsibilities, enlisting them in the ranks of the social organizations and assigning them to such service in the church as each may be able to render.

7. Special responsibility to be placed by the church upon the young people for personal evangelistic work to be carried on by their own leaders under the supervision of the pastor.

8. Such instruction of Sunday-school teachers as will enable them to discover the evangelistic note in their Sunday-school lessons.

9. Full use of the evangelistic possibilities in catechetical or communicant classes.

10. A period of intensive evangelistic work as a climax to the church year.

11. Carefully fitting newly secured members into the life and work of the church.

#### IV. INTERDENOMINATIONAL COÖPERATION

1. The denominational agencies of evangelism should endeavour to lead their own churches to co-operate in simultaneous programs of evangelism, especially in every community where there is a Federation or Council of Churches, or other association.

2. The churches, in coöperation, should begin their program of evangelism in the early fall, giving special attention to the study of the community, definitely locating the unchurched and rallying all the Christian forces of the community to this work.

3. There should be a winter and spring period of cultivation and ingathering. In communities where a pre-Easter program is agreed upon by all the churches, the denominational agencies should unite in supporting it.

## 158 Motives and Methods in Modern Evangelism

It will be seen from this outline that a general plan is on foot to reach every church of every communion in every community and to secure the coöperation of every member in personal evangelistic effort. It will be noted that the spirit of church rivalry is to be lost sight of in the presence of the common task of the Universal Church of God to win the world to Christ.

Other denominations are forming Commissions on Evangelism; notably, the Protestant Episcopal Church has just effected such an organization. It is called "The Commission on Evangelism." Hitherto the word Evangelism has not appeared very largely in the nomenclature of this communion. The words Missions and Missioner were used instead of Evangelism and Evangelist. This is a token of the fact that the word Evangelism is now being understood; that it means not a simple matter of revivalism with much or little of emotion as its only field: it is the propagation of the good news, the evangel of the Son of God, and has its place in religious education, in catechetical instruction, as well as in special revival services.

The message which our Commission has here sent out to the Christian forces of America may well encourage us all. Each pastor can feel that he is a part of a great movement which will be successful to the extent that he gives himself to this great call. Each denomination can realize that no great movement ever swept America that was

the product of one church alone. If we are to win America for Christ, all the churches must stand together, and each denomination must do its utmost to oppose the united forces of evil by a living, eager, personal faith and devotion. When the churches say, "This one thing I do," and give themselves unitedly to answer the blessed worldwide call of the Master, we shall come nearest to answering the last prayer of our Lord for His Church—"that they all may be one."

## XXIV

### THE CONSTITUENCY ROLL

**T**HERE is in every community a large group, both within and without the church, that ought to come under the influence of that church and be won, first of all, to allegiance to Jesus Christ and then to fellowship with the church. No church can consider itself at all up-to-date, even in the mechanics of church work, until it has in some way definitely assured itself that it knows its field and has definitely put itself in touch with every person who ought legitimately to come under its influence. The extent of that field will be a great surprise to every pastor; it is a field incredibly larger than that which any pastor or official could have imagined. To be told that a church ought to have an actual constituency roll as large as or larger than its own church membership would be a great surprise; the average pastor would be inclined to say at once, "It is impossible to secure so large a roll of people who might be called legitimate prospects for us to seek and win to our fellowship."

We do not hesitate, however, to say that a roll of prospects as large as its membership is the very least which the average church ought to consider.

That the reasonableness of this may be apparent, may we suggest some of the methods by which such a roll can be obtained? Let us remember at the outset that the constituency roll is of the largest importance and presents the greatest single evangelistic possibility in the life of any church.

Among the sources for an adequate constituency roll we make the following suggestions, which do not by any means exhaust the fountains of information:

1. A house to house canvass of the entire community.

2. The names of all children in the Sunday-school who are not members of the church.

3. The parents or relatives of Sunday-school children.

4. All unconverted persons in the families of church members and pewholders.

5. All attendants at church services who are not members.

6. "Unchurched" friends and neighbours of those who are connected with the church.

7. All young people connected with the Young People's Societies and their friends.

8. Occasional visitors to church services, secured by visitors' cards placed in pews.

9. Friends of members of men's clubs, women's clubs, literary societies, political organizations, etc., who are affiliated with no church.

There should be a definite house-to-house can-

## 162 Motives and Methods in Modern Evangelism

vass—not in the spirit of proselyting, but in a spirit of fellowship and kindly interest. There must be no narrowness, no selfishness; just an honest effort to find the religious alignment of every person in the entire community, town or city, so that all may be invited to Christian fellowship. If Jewish families, or families in touch with the Roman Catholic Church, are found, a report ought to be sent at once to their rabbi or priest.

When one knows what families inside and outside of the church would like to be considered as in some way related to the church or congregation, there should be a complete family list made, showing the name and age, and if possible the birthday, of each member of the family, and whether its members are members of the church, Sunday-school, or congregation. This ought to be carefully filed, so that a glance will tell how many of the family are members of any department of the church and how many are definitely enrolled as members of the church.

There ought to be friendly visitation in connection with any "Come to Church Sunday," or "Church Rally" or "Bible School Rally," or "Decision Day." These families should not only be visited themselves and earnestly invited to come into more active fellowship with the church, but each family should be requested to give the names of any friends or neighbours who are unidentified with any particular church and for whom the aid



of that family should be enlisted. This is especially true of any unconverted neighbours or friends.

Members of all the organizations of the church should be enlisted for the perfection of this constituency roll and asked to give the names of their neighbours and friends who might be considered legitimate prospects.

Every member of every men's club or women's club, every missionary society, young people's organization and literary club should be urged to give the name of every person in the circle of their acquaintance whom one might hope to win to friendly interest in that particular church, and the person suggesting the name should be depended on to add to the invitation the support of his own personal effort.

For evangelistic purposes it would be highly important to know the names of the husbands of wives who are members, the wives of husbands now members, children who are not members, contributors to the church and attendants of the congregation not now members. All such prospects should be visited systematically, not simply once or twice, but until the matter of the acceptance of Jesus Christ and a purpose to live the life which He asks us to live has been definitely settled one way or the other—until they have become affiliated with that church or some other church or definitely refused to consider any such alliance. To assist

## 164 Motives and Methods in Modern Evangelism

in this work many denominations have a "prospect card." The following is suggested:

Name .....

Residence .....Tel. ....

Reasons for being on prospect list:

.....Member of Sunday School

.....Attends Young People's Society

.....Attends Bible Class

.....Attends Church Service

.....Wife or children members

.....Attends some organization of men or  
women

.....Member out of town

.....Recently come to town

Other information .....

.....  
Called on by.....Date.....

Report and follow-up recommendations.....

.....

What great evangelistic possibilities will be opened when you know the names of the unconverted parents of the children in your Sunday-school and of the children themselves who are not members of the church, and when you know the names of the unconverted friends and neighbours and companions and chums of the young people! All this opens a field so large that every pastor should have some layman definitely appointed to

assist him in looking after this constituency roll. It should devolve on such a person to keep a full list of names and a record of their visitation. He might well be known as the Constituency Secretary or Steward and should be a person of fine executive ability and, if possible, well and favourably known throughout the church and community. Few positions in the church would be of more importance than such an office if properly appreciated.

The pastor must be in such close touch with this constituency roll as to have constantly on hand a large list of prospects for church membership; and that list should be so classified that when any member is willing to do some personal work for Christ, the pastor could immediately put into his hands the names of half a dozen persons who could be visited with the hope and expectation that under the guidance and inspiration of the Holy Spirit they might be brought to accept Jesus Christ at once.

If a pastor is not sufficiently interested in the supreme task of his ministry to give himself with uncalculating devotion to a service like this, does he not lay himself open to the solemn words of the Saviour concerning those "whose own the sheep are not"? And ought we not all to remind ourselves of Him who said of Himself, "The good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep"?

## MEN'S EVANGELISTIC CLUBS

**N**O recent movement seems to have more of promise in it than the forming of men's evangelistic clubs with the one supreme purpose, on the part of the men, of winning their associates to the personal choice of Jesus Christ.

These clubs were first formed very largely among new converts. The joy of their own experience, they felt, would be contagious if only other people could know about it. So they banded themselves together to perform that service to which all of Christ's disciples are called. In many cases the custom is for the members of a club to lunch together at least once a week, and divide themselves into as many tables as there are tens in their company. When the name of the table is called the secretary gives an account of the work which has been done during the previous week by the members at the table; what assistance has been rendered to pastors, how many special meetings have been held, how many personal interviews have been given and with what results. The spirit of devotion is so strong that to spend a week without actually winning some one to Jesus Christ would be a reproach which must by all means be avoided.

One of the purposes of these associations has been the forming of other associations, like themselves, in their own city or in near-by towns. They have already formed a national association with officers, committees and regular meetings.

Atlanta in the South and Pittsburgh in the North have been the centers from which gracious streams of influence have gone forth. These clubs are sponsoring noon meetings in empty stores or in theatres, to which they have called representative evangelistic pastors throughout the country.

Under the general auspices of the Pittsburgh Christian Laymen's Association a convention and retreat was held at Mountain Lake Park. A special train was run from Pittsburgh, and hundreds of laymen and pastors were gathered there for a four days' inspirational meeting. Under the same auspices a conference and retreat was held in October in the Country Club at Ben Avon, where, in retreats of two days each, the young people, the ministers, the women and the laymen were gathered for teaching and inspiration.

As a result of these meetings, prayer groups were organized in many churches. In some cases the young people returned with so much of zeal and devotion that the pastor was glad to give them the right of way at the evening service, abandoning his sermon that the young people might bring their own message.

The thought uppermost in these clubs is that

## 168 Motives and Methods in Modern Evangelism

the Christian worker must himself be inspired of God before he can be successful in leading others to accept his Saviour. Four objectives are set forth by the Pittsburgh Association:

1. The Surrendered Will.
2. The Morning Watch.
3. The Power of Prayer.
4. Witnessing for Christ Daily.

There are in the city many business concerns whose employees the members of the club have taken it upon themselves to interview, in order to find out just where they stand religiously. They do not do this in the spirit which would move one seeking to make an additional member for a social club. They are constantly reminded that it requires consecration on the part of the seeker to bring others into vital relationship with Christ. New converts are urged to bear testimony. They are shown that it will be impossible for them to preserve their own religious life unless they seek to share it with others. They are shown that they are called, like the early apostles, to be witnesses of those things in which Christ hath appeared unto them, and thus to spread the good news.

In many cases the club men are not allowed to preach a sermon, but are permitted only to give an "experience." This introduces a personal element which is exceedingly effective in the work they seek to do, and which gives opportunity for a half-dozen or a dozen to go together and to bring

the cumulative effect of their united testimony to bear upon any who may be hesitating or filled with doubt. The appeal to fact has been found to be most effective; more are won by testimony than by argument.

Some of these clubs are the outgrowth of large Sunday-school classes. In such cases, every new member is put into the hands of the club members to learn just what the church affiliation has been and what is the new member's present attitude to the Christian life. In the close contact of the classroom, especially if an evangelistic teacher is at the front, all the conditions favour a personal decision for Christ.

This movement in some quarters has been the occasion of a marked change in the character of the church membership. It was formerly said that there were twice as many women as men in the church, and this probably was true; but in certain quarters, where this system of soliciting has taken deepest root, the percentage of men in church membership has greatly increased, rising in some cases as high as forty-five per cent. of men and fifty-five per cent. of women.

The meetings which are being sponsored by the Christian Laymen's Association are for both ministers and laymen. They are times of heart searching, with much time given to prayer and confession of sin, all leading to consideration of soul winning.

## XXVI

### PLANS OF CONSERVATION

**W**E shall not make heavy inroads upon the masses outside of the church if we have a steady procession passing in at the altars of the church and passing out on the road of those who are marked "withdrawn," "unknown," "removed without letter," upon our church rolls. We are accustomed to explain losses or slight gains by saying, "The records have been pruned." But that process is going on each year. It is an easy thing to say that somebody is to blame for these fearful and unexplained losses. How came it so? It is possible that the individual was not in earnest, or joined the church from some ulterior motive; but this, we are glad to believe, is true only to a very limited extent. It is possible that those persons entered the church with high purpose and holy joy after a real experience of holy things, but their ardour has cooled. The cares of this world have choked the Word, and it has become unfruitful. What can be done to keep in our folds all those who have entered them, and how shall we plan our work so that all this waste and loss may be avoided?

Of course, it is important in the highest degree that the persons who come into the church should



have had some experience in the things of God which is satisfactory to them. We do not say that all experiences must be alike. These may be as wide apart as are the other distinctions among individuals. As no two persons are exactly alike physically or intellectually, so no two are exactly alike in their spiritual desires or experiences; but in some way we ought to realize that a new life is now begun, a life from a different center of motivation. It is a great hour when a man can say, "I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." Let us do honest, thoroughgoing business as we seek to bring men and women from the old life into the new and changed one. Too frequently it has seemed as if the pastor and people thought the great triumph had been won when individuals were received into the church. This is only the hour of birth. Now the question is, Shall that life be a strong and helpful one? Shall that individual be able to care for himself by the grace of God and something more, or shall he be able to walk alone only where there are no obstacles, and when he finds difficulties will these prove to be stumbling blocks over which he will fall out of the way?

In physical life, the largest losses by death are among those who are newly born. They are handicapped by ignorance and by indulgence. In the last few years, by aseptic and antiseptic methods, the death rate of our children has been cut in half. We have learned how to care for their food and

keep it untainted. We have learned what kinds of food they should receive, and in what quantities; the reduced mortality is the result of wise scientific methods diligently enforced. There is a great lesson there as to the life of those who come into the church as babes in Christ. They need food, and that of the right kind. They need the attention of somebody as really interested in them as a mother would be for her child. A moment's thought will convince us that this is the most reasonable thing in the world. Let us apply it.

When young people or older persons are received into the church, they ought to be anchored at once to some responsibility. We are most helped by helping others. We are not in the church to congratulate ourselves that we are better than other people and that all we have to do now is to enjoy religion in a selfish indulgence. As we so often say, religion is social. One cannot keep it to himself. For Christianity, it takes God and the individual and somebody else to develop its greatest power. If we do not use our faith, we shall lose it. We are to show our faith by our works.

Every pastor ought to have initiative enough to devise methods to give each convert something to do. First of all, as a preventive against loneliness and carelessness, every person who comes into the church should find some one to whom he or she can look as a big brother or sister, to whom he

can go for counsel and encouragement—or, rather, who will seek him out and see to it that he does not lose his fellowship with God and the Church. They must watch over such persons that they do not “forget the assembling of themselves together.” In the Old Testament it is written, “They that feared the Lord spake often one to another, and a book of remembrance was written.” And, “They shall be mine, saith the Lord of Hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels.” In the New Testament we are exhorted not to forget the assembling of ourselves together.

We have what we call “the means of grace,” and that is a significant phrase. In the physical world we have food to nourish our physical life. In the spiritual life, the means of grace are to perform the same function. We are to “grow in grace and in the knowledge of Jesus Christ.” In the worship of God’s house, in the fellowship of prayer, we find the means that keep our faith and love aflame.

So far as forms of activity are concerned, these are many, and in some phase of them every new convert ought to find an interesting field of service. To begin with, every one who has experienced the new life ought to be taught that he was saved to serve; that as he himself was won by the help of others, so he must go out to reach still others, passing on his blessings to enrich the lives of other people.

When it comes to actual service in the church, there are many forms of activity which will suggest themselves to the faithful pastor. The pastor must himself see to it that he looks after the lambs of the flock. No one can take his place. There must be a solicitude on his part "even unto death," as the Saviour said, that no lamb should be lost out of the fold.

Meetings should be held for the religious life; that is, in addition to the regular prayer and testimony meetings of the church—meetings for the study of God's word, meetings where the world-wide challenge of the Church shall be laid upon the hearts of the converts, where they shall get an intelligent understanding of the great missionary enterprises of their own denomination. The great social message of the Church must also be impressed upon them. They must have a share in the development of the social life of the young people. They must have an intelligent conception of the social bonds which bind people together and be taught that we are members one of another.

In the activities of the church, there are, first of all, the Young People's Societies; into those societies the young people ought to be welcomed by young people, and when they are in them they ought to work for the young people. The spirit which draws young people together in the world for evil purposes can be so sanctified that it shall be a mighty power in the development of spiritual

life. The Sunday-school ought to claim first as pupils and then as teachers and officers all those who come into the church. There is room for every one, from the cradle roll to the senior classes. There are men's classes and women's classes, and opportunities for evangelistic work and personal fellowship, which will mutually enrich the lives of those who share in this ministry.

There are men's clubs and women's clubs which interest themselves in matters literary, or social or political. Overarching all these purposes, there ought to be the sweetness of Christian fellowship sanctifying all other fellowships and helping us to see that we should be interested in everything that concerns humanity; that not one part of life is secular and another part of life is religious, but that the abiding processes of religion are to permeate all our social and political activities.

These are some of the methods by which the spiritual life of our new converts may be conserved so that they will not be largest spiritually when they are born, but that each month and year will see them growing in grace, see them developing a more eager spirit of service, and finding in their own hearts day by day such revelations of the riches of God as make their spiritual life an increasing joy, growing brighter and brighter unto the perfect day.

## XXVII

### THE EVANGELISTIC IMPERATIVE

**I**N another book, *Pastor and Evangelist*, I have a chapter on "The Pastor Evangelist's Reward," which I considered there in three-fold fashion: First, the sense of fellowship with his Lord which comes to him who is faithful in his evangelistic message. The man is conscious that he shares the passion which sent his Master to seek and save the lost. The second feature in the great reward of the evangelistic pastor is the evidence of changed lives—to see bad men becoming good and blasphemers becoming men of prayer. And, third, the marvellous reflex influence which comes to the worker himself, building up his own spiritual life and giving him thus such assurances of spiritual life and power as to strike all questioning forever dumb.

What I now wish to say is that the evangelistic call is at the very basis of the Church's life. If the Church does not sound it, it has no place in the world. The last call which Jesus uttered was a call to this task. It was not in the indicative or subjunctive, but in the imperative mood, and it was hot with haste, "Go quick everywhere! and, lo, I am with you always!" As to Paul, so to

each one of us, the message comes, "I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness." And see how Paul responded to it. To his elders at Ephesus he sent word, "Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears." Have we answered our call after the same fashion? To the church at Corinth, he affirms: "I have had much affliction and anguish of heart, and wrote unto you with many tears." And to Rome he said, "I am ready to preach the gospel—the good news—to you that are at Rome also, for I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation for every one that believeth."

What a challenge there is to us in a life like that! We cannot hesitate or equivocate, we cannot fail, when so much depends upon our action. Are there men in whom you are so much interested that they are on your prayer list every day; are you going out with the urge of Calvary upon you to win them? Every life insurance agent and every seller of automobiles has a list of prospective customers which he runs over every day, and even sends their names to the home office—which will expect him to develop a new list from day to day. What would happen to a life insurance agent if he went one month without selling life insurance to anybody? What would happen to an automo-

## 178 Motives and Methods in Modern Evangelism

bile agent if even a week should pass and he had no sales to report? If a life insurance agent must make at least fifty sales, and an automobile agent as many more, each year, could not a man commissioned of Almighty God to present the most wonderful attraction which was ever offered under the sun expect to win at least half as many to the Kingdom of God? And what would happen in any church if even a dozen members should unite with the pastor in bringing that number to Christ by their personal effort?

Be assured of this, that when you come down the pulpit steps for the last time and look over the years in retrospect, the only sermons that will seem to you to amount to anything are the sermons which presented Christ as the Saviour of Men, and in which you urged, with all the imperative of a burning heart, His choice at once. May I bring you a testimony out of the long ago?

When John Wesley talked of his life with God, he did not begin it at Epworth or Oxford; he began it at Aldersgate Street, where his heart was "strangely warmed." It was there the divine imperative smote him, and the Oxford don crucified his pride and went to preaching in the open air. "I submit," he said, "to be more vile," and, standing on a little grassy mound, he preached to a great crowd from the words, "The spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor." Hear him say, "What



marvel the devil does not love field preaching? Neither do I. I love a commodious room, a soft cushion, a handsome pulpit. But where is my zeal if I do not trample all those things under foot in order to save one more soul? ”

Burrill says of that time, “The militant spirit had died out in the church. The ninety-nine sheep were lost in the wilderness. There was only one fat well-wooled sheep in the fold, and beside that one comfortable sheep the equally fat and drowsy shepherd slumbered and left the ninety-nine in the wilderness to seek him. The wandering sheep, that is, must pursue the shepherd and not the shepherd the sheep.”

One day all this changed. Wesley had passed the Rubicon, but recall the price he paid for it. Four years later there was a thrilling scene at Oxford. It was Wesley’s last sermon before the university. He spoke in St. Mary’s Church, the same pulpit from which Wyclif had denounced Rome, where Ridley and Latimer had been cited for trial, and where Cranmer “had flung down the burden of his shame,” and thence to the stake. A martyr spirit was in the air, and the memories of those heroes inspired courage for the hour. The great church was thronged with gownsmen and heads of colleges, the great men of the universities were there. Wesley stood up to speak; his text was, “They were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and spake the word of God with boldness.” Then

## 180 Motives and Methods in Modern Evangelism

Wesley's evangelism flamed forth; exhortation, bold rebuke, powerful appeals and personal application followed. The vast audience was alternately moved to tears and burning indignation.

When the sermon was over Wesley was an out-cast. The doors of Oxford were shut against him forever. But if you go back there to-day, you will find that Oxford guards Wesley's room as a sacred shrine.

Unhasting, yet unresting, Wesley goes on, riding until he is in a fever and then preaching himself out of it. "Leisure and I have parted company," and they never shook hands until the day of his death. "For the most of his life, publicly abused and often assaulted with club and stone and fist, forbidden to preach in Newgate Prison, lest he should make men wicked, at Bedlam lest he should drive men mad, accused of every crime known to the decalogue, and yet so buoyant his nature and so strong his faith that, though he had in addition to his other troubles suits in chancery and a jealous wife, he records, 'I do not remember to have had lowness of spirits for a quarter of an hour since I was born.'" Travelling 250,000 miles, preaching 45,000 sermons, bringing 81,000 people into the societies under his care, he ascended to his Lord in the eighty-eighth year of his pilgrimage of life, and left as his legacy to the world "a well-worn clergyman's gown, a much abused reputation and—the Methodist Church."

Does it not make one feel for the buckle of his belt to read a story like that? How could we ever go in by the same gate of Heaven which Wesley entered if we had failed to do our best? Like St. Paul, he knew only one thing—"Jesus Christ and him crucified."

If I do not weary you, let me add to the cumulative effect of my contention the testimony of two great men who have comparatively recently fallen on sleep. It is Alexander Maclaren, to whom the world is unspeakably indebted for his *Expositions of Holy Scripture*, who is rising now for his swan song. In his eightieth year he has accepted the presidency of the great Baptist Congress, and in the presence of eight thousand persons, a majority of them ministers, this is his message to them and to us:

"We are crying out for a revival. Dear friends, the revival must begin with each of us by ourselves. Power for service is second, power for holiness of character is first, and only the man who is willing to let the Spirit of God work His will upon him and do what He will has a right to expect that he will be filled with the Holy Ghost and with power. Do not get on the wrong track. Your revival, Christian ministers, must begin in your study and on your knees. Your revival must be for yourself, with no thought of service, but if once we have learned where our strength is, we shall never be so foolish as to go forth in our own

## 182 Motives and Methods in Modern Evangelism

strength—or we shall be abandoned as we deserve to be.”

And here is another Alexander, compeer and associate of the first. It is Alexander Whyte, than whom no minister has influenced me more, the great pastor of Free St. George's in Edinburgh. This is the testimony he left behind him as he came in sight of the golden mile-stone: “What seemed to me to be a divine voice spoke with all commanding power in my conscience and said to me, as clear as clear could be, ‘Go on, and flinch not. Go back and boldly finish the work that has been given you to do. Speak out, and fear not. Make them at any cost to see themselves in God's holy law as in a glass. Do you that, for no one else will do it. No one else will so risk his life and his reputation, and you haven't much of either left to risk. Go home, and spend what is left of you in your appointed task, in showing your people that they are sinning and that they are in need of a Saviour.’”

If there is no difference between Christ and Mohammed or Confucius or Buddha, and if there is no day hasting toward its close, when the call to human life will be too late—then one may watch with calmness the sauntering gods on some convenient Olympus; but if Jesus Christ does not keep company with them, if there is none other name whereby men can be saved, then how are we straitened until we have delivered the last mes-

sage of hope to the last needy man and woman! The wise man said in his Proverbs, "The fruit of the righteous is the tree of life, and he that winneth souls is wise." To His disciples Jesus said, "Lift up your eyes, and look unto the fields, for they are white, all ready to harvest; and he that reapeth receiveth wages and gathereth fruit unto life eternal."

There is nothing that makes one so happy in his own soul as to feel that God has used him to win somebody from darkness to light. Nothing so increases his own faith as to see another experiencing the new birth and becoming transformed by the power of an endless life. If we can believe God's word, three worlds are interested in every spiritual transformation: It is written, there is joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth; and there is certainly joy in that same sinner's heart; and the joy which the soul knows when he leads another into the newness of life is beyond words to tell. He knows that his joys are measured by eternal values and that a soul deathless and immortal has had imparted to it the life divine, for "this is life eternal, to know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent."

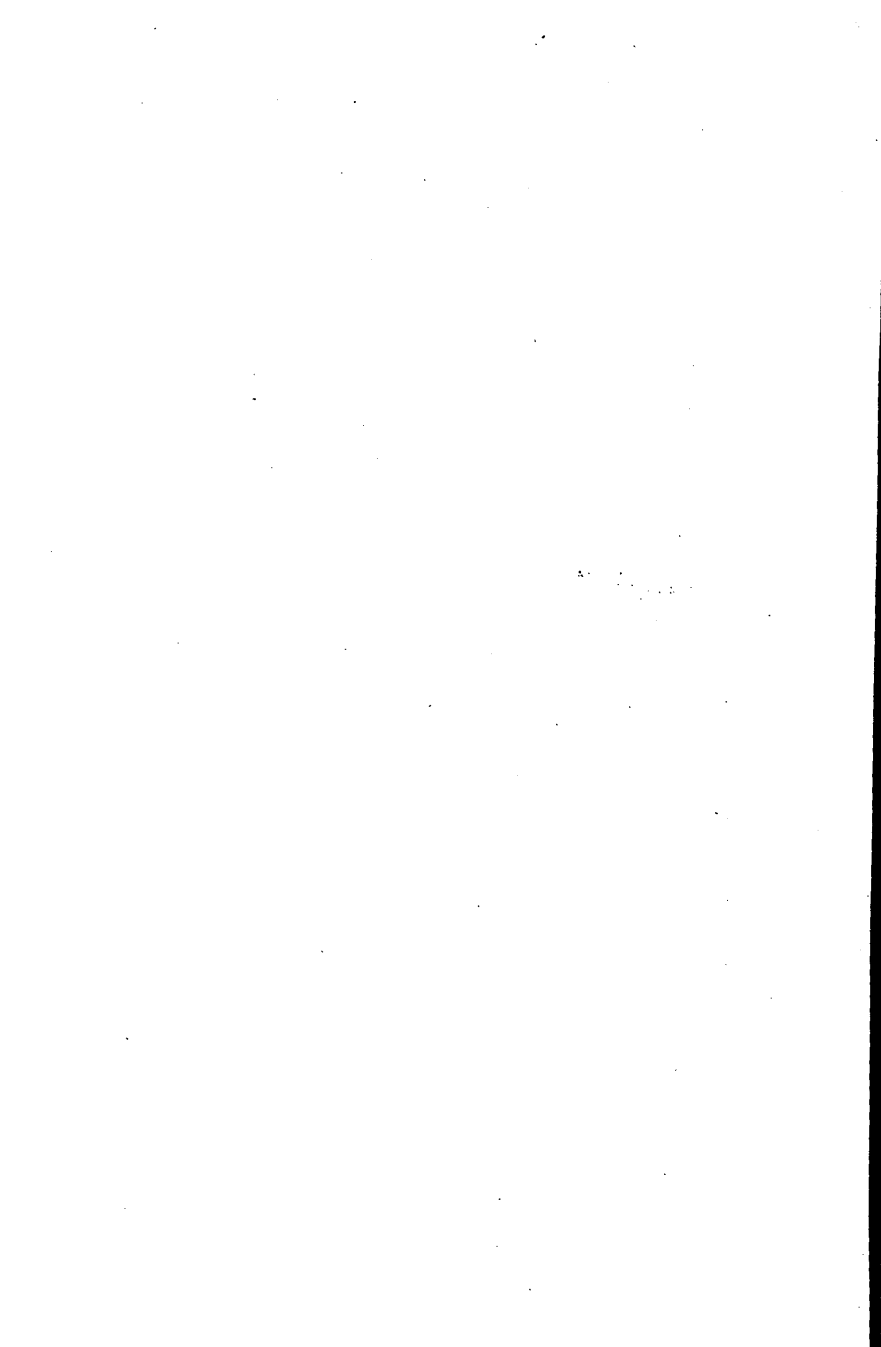
Then if you are giving answer to this glorious imperative, there is borne in upon the heart a course of action that is cumulative and will go on until volcanoes have made the seas into at-

mospheres of mist. What a day that was for the Church when Andrew found Peter, his brother, and brought him to Jesus! What a day that was for the Kingdom of God when Stephen, with his martyr's confession, and Ananias, with his sweet interpretation, reached the heart of Saul, and so united in bringing him to Christ! It was a simple cobbler who won Spurgeon to Christ; it was a humble Moravian who showed John Wesley the way of personal salvation; it was a layman who won Moody, and a simple-hearted woman who showed John Bunyan the way to God, changed the rollicking tinker, and made him a power so great that, next to the Bible itself, the words he penned have gone farther than any other message.

So in your own case, you have won a young man or a young woman; it may be that they will begin life's work together and, because of your action, their children will be trained in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, and their children's children will pass on to coming generations the blessed truths which have changed their lives—so that in a few short generations the two that you won to Christ shall have multiplied your influence a hundred or a thousand fold. Is it not a challenge unspeakable to your own heart to be faithful to every opportunity? Shall we not listen with bated breath and eager spirit to the Master's final message which thrilled His Church and sent it to its Pentecost, "Go quick unto all the world, and

preach the gospel to every creature; and he that believeth shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be condemned." If that is the evangel, let us preach it. Let us go from this holy hour hot with haste and with love to do it. To your tents, and to your knees, O Israel!

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